

GEMS OF RAMADAN

SHAYKH AHMAD MUSA JIBRIL

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Transcribed from Khawaatir by
Shaykh Ahmad Jibril in
Ramadan 1434AH

Get up my brother and sister and shake the dust of sins off your back. Spice up and decorate your Tawbah more by making Wudhu and two Rak'ah. Declare your Tawbah to Him, cry in agony over your sins and start the path to Allah.

Repentance is a shadow that should never ever depart you.
Repentance is condolence to those who are righteous.
Ramadhaan is the prosperous season for all of that.

Shaykh Ahmad Jibril (HafidhAllah)

Introduction

Bismillaah il-Rahmaan il-Raheem

In the Name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All Praise be to Allah, we praise Him, we seek His help, we seek His forgiveness and we ask Him to guide us. We take refuge in Him from the evil of our ourselves and from our evil deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whoever He misguides, none can guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad SalAllahu alayhi wa sallam is His slave and messenger.

All praise is due to Allah with Whose grace all good deeds are realised and the Salah and Salam of Allah be upon His Messenger, his companions and all his loyal followers.

This book has been prepared using transcribed notes from Khawaatir given by Shaykh Ahmad Jibril (HafidhAllah) in Ramadan 1434AH (2013). We ask Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa to reward immensely the sister(s) who transcribe the Shaykh's classes, many of which can be found at www.opensourceilm.wordpress.com. Please send details of any errors to OpenSourceilm@Outlook.Com.

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May Allah azza wa jal place barakah in this work and may it reach those that will benefit most from it.

Shaykh Ahmad Jibril

Shaykh Ahmad was born in the United States, and spent part of his childhood in the city of Madina in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia when his father, Shaykh Musa Jibril, was a student at the Islamic University of Madina. It was there where Shaykh Ahmad also became Hafidh al Qur'an at the age of 11. Shaykh Ahmad then spent the rest of his younger years back in the United States graduating from high school in 1989. Thereafter, he studied at the Islamic University of Madina as his father did, and graduated with a degree in the Shari'a. He returned to the United States and finished his JD/LLM (masters of law) degree from Michigan law schools. May Allah (azza wajal) reward him and his family. Aameen.

CONTENTS

Shackle Your Inclinations	6
Yearning to Allah	13
Secrets with Allah	19
Fasting is For Me	24
Women in Ramadan	30
Catch the Breeze	36
Let the Competitions Begin	42
Tawbah and Inaabah	47
He Responds to the Invocations	58
The Arrows of the Night Never Miss	67
A Finger worth More Than a 1000 Soldiers	73
Revive Abandoned Worships	77
Befriend the Quran	86
The Power of the Quran	93
They Give to the Poor, Orphan & Captive	100
Sweetness in Siyam (fasting)	107
Our Spain & Ramadan	114
I'tikaaf	121
Final Ten Days of Ramadan	126
The Night of Destiny - Laylat al-Qadr	130
Ain Jalut in Ramadan	139
Izzah in Ramadan	152
Fasting of the Tongue	162
Saying Goodbye to Ramadan	175

Shackle Your Inclinations

Alhamdulillah Thumma Alhamdulillah for the great blessing of living to reach Ramadhan. A true blessing, a blessing many in their graves desperately wish to have an opportunity at. A blessing many onlookers will regret they did not take advantage of. Even though there is no specific proof on congratulating one another for the start of Ramadhan, there is general proof on the permissibility of greeting one another in general matters upon receiving glad tiding and good news. We all know the story of Ka'b Ibn Maalik and his two partners, when Allah revealed their forgiveness after they were ordered by the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to be abandoned and shunned.

In Surat at-Tawbah, Allah says:

وَعَلَى الثَّلَاثَةِ الَّذِينَ خُلِفُوا... ﴿التوبة: ١١٨﴾

And [He also forgave] the three who were left behind [and regretted their error]. (Surat at-Tawbah: 118)

He declared that He has forgiven them. When it was revealed, people went to them in groups, congratulating them. Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah said commenting on this story in Zaad al-Ma'aad (زاد المعاد), that it is proof that any Imaanic blessing is something one may embrace another on and congratulate him for. Ibn Muflih narrated many opinions that Imaam Ahmad said pertaining to this matter but at the end he said, the most popular opinion is that Imaam Ahmad permitted it.

Allah said:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿يونس: ٥٨﴾

Say: "In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate." (Surat Yunus: 58)

Having established that, I say may Allah bless your Ramadhan and accept from you. May Allah honour you by granting you the opportunity to gain the most out of this Ramadhan and may it be sincere for His sake. I ask Allah that you be among the special ones whose necks are marked as saved from the punishment of Hell.

We will have daily Khawaatir (خواطر) or reminders Inshaa Allah Ta'aala after Salat al-'Asr. I will try my best to keep them around ten minutes. They will be short so they will not take us away from our Ibaadah, because every second of your life is precious and more precious is every second of Ramadhaan. Putting these talks into action is the purpose of these talks and of all knowledge. It starts during the talk, when a verse is mentioned, imagine as if Allah is speaking to you and you are ready to act on it. When you hear a Hadith, imagine that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam is before you and you are attentively listening, contemplating and ready to act upon it. When you hear a story of the Salaf, let your mind flow back to their time as if you are consulting them and sitting there enjoying their precious advice.

In Ramadhaan, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam compared those who succeed and get their forgiveness from Allah like one whose neck is freed, which means like a slave that has been freed. Why this example or parable? In order to understand it, you have to understand the Fiqh rule. In divorce, marriage and freeing a slave, whether one is joking or serious there is no going back on it. If he says a woman is divorced (joking or serious) and if he frees a slave (joking or serious), there is no going back on it. If a human with all his deficient qualities cannot go back on freeing a slave when he does so, imagine the All Mighty, Al-Ghafoor, Ar-Raheem, Al-Kareem. If He frees your neck from Hell, do you think He will go back on His word? Ta'aal Allahu 'An Thaalika 'Aluwan Kabeera (تعالى الله عن ذلك علواً كبيراً).

This is the month where forgiveness comes to you from every angle. Not getting forgiveness from Allah in this month, means you worked hard not to get the forgiveness from Allah. As Ramadhaan starts, keep these three Hadith in your mind about attaining the forgiveness of Allah.

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

Whoever fasted for Ramadhaan in faith and seeking the reward from Allah, he will be forgiven. Two words in these Hadith, Imaan (إيماناً) and Ihtisaab (احتساباً). Imaan in all three of these Hadith, Ibn Hajr Rahimahullah said it is faith and knowing and believing it is obligatory upon you. Ihtisaab means that you are seeking the reward only from Allah. What reward are we talking about? Forgiveness from Allah. Does it stop there? No, certain people chosen that their necks be freed from Hellfire. Does it stop there? No, everyday you get golden moments where your Du'aa is accepted. Everyday you get mountains of deeds, only Allah calculates it for you. Everyday you fast, you are seventy years away from Hell if not more. If you finish Ramadhaan properly, seventy times thirty, you have two thousand and one hundred years away from Hell.

So the first Hadith says whoever fasts for the sake of Allah (Imaan and Ihtisaab for the sake of Allah), he gets forgiveness. The second Hadith has a near same ending but a different beginning.

مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

Let us say you had some type of deficiency in fasting, there is another shot at it, another opportunity to attain the forgiveness of Allah. Praying the nights, what we call Taraweeh.

There is even a third shot at it.

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

Every one of the three Hadith is in the Sihaah. Let us say someone had a deficiency in fasting and he had a deficiency in praying the night Qiyaam (the Taraweeh). Then here is the third shot at it, the Night of Destiny (Laylat al-Qadar), and that by itself is sufficient to attain the forgiveness of Allah.

All three of these Hadith have the same ending, you will be forgiven. You will be forgiven if you fast the days of Ramadhaan, if you pray the nights of Ramadhaan and if you pray the night of Laylat al-Qadar. And in between all that forgiveness, Allah gives multiple folds of reward to get you to the high ranks of Jannah. So if you do not get forgiven by Allah, you sure know how to dodge, but you are dodging forgiveness of the Ghafoor. You are avoiding Rahmah (mercy) and forgiveness pouring at you from every angle. Rahmah and forgiveness you desperately need for blessings in this life, and more importantly for entry to Jannah.

So many chances for forgiveness and attaining the high rank, that the mercy of mankind the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, Rahmatal-lil-'Aalameen (رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ) and

Roohil-Quds (روح القدس) Jibreel made Du'aa on one who misses out on this opportunity. Abu Hurayrah radhiyallahu 'anhu said in an authentic Hadith, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was ascending the Minbar, and then he said Aameen every step. Aameen, Aameen. They said O Prophet of Allah, why did you say Aameen? He said Jibreel came to me and said may Allah rub his nose in the dust, the person who Ramadhaan comes and does not get forgiven by Allah, so I said Aameen.

The superiority of Ramadhaan comes in knowing what you do in Ramadhaan is extra reward, extra credit. It is knowing that it is time to make up for what you missed out in the past eleven months. What you read of Qur'an, what you do of Salah, what you say of Dhikr is worth more than any other month. Multiple folds of reward, neither I nor anyone can calculate it, that is why the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said in a Hadith Qudsi:

كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ إِلَّا الصِّيَامَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ

So much reward that Allah calculates it for you, to honour you. It is for Him, He says it is for Me and I shall reward you. The reward continues to elevate in its value until it reaches the summit peak of being worth 83.33 years (a thousand months). One Rak'ah in Laylat al-Qadar ends up being worth as if you did it for thirty thousand nights. One Subhan Allah will end up being worth as if you did it for thirty thousand nights.

That path to seeking the summit of Firdaws is a content path of Ibaadah (worshipping Allah). When you take off on that path (and now is the time to start), you see plains, valleys, hills and mountains, and on the left and side of that path you are going to see bandits and thugs. These thugs, robbers, creeps and thieves on that path and on that journey do not want your money. They do not want your wealth, they do not want your life, they want something more precious than all that. They are after your Deen and your Imaan and your time to attain that. In order to reach safety and salvation, a person on that path and course needs guidance. He needs a map to direct him to the safe routes and the hidden spots where the bandits pop up, when to move faster, when to maintain a pace, and that is what we are going to be talking about in these Khawaatir Inshaa Allah.

Ramadhāan is a virtuous season and a time for diligence. It is our duty to recommend to each other the truth (Haqq) and inspire each other for Ibaadah and righteousness. It is general throughout the year but more so in Ramadhāan, as in Surat al-'Asr:

...وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴿العصر: ٣﴾

And recommend one another to the truth and recommend one another to patience. (Surat al-'Asr: 3)

No one is exempted from recommending and no one is above accepting recommendation. In Ramadhāan, many veer off the course of what Ramadhāan was intended for. In some cultures, it has become a time for taking one away from Allah rather than taking him closer to Allah. It has become stripped of what it was intended for. Some spend it in vain, others in Mubaah and others incur sin. It is the few who stay on the path, avoiding the bandits, speeding their path on their way to Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala.

The Shaytaan has been shackled and he is one cause of the sin, the other cause is your Nafs (the self, the soul). If one is worse in Ramadhāan, he can diagnose his Nafs al-Ammaarah Bis-Soo' (نفس الأماراة بالسوء) as having worse tendencies than the Shaytaan.

...النَّفْسَ لِأَمَّارَةٍ بِالسُّوءِ... ﴿يوسف: ٥٣﴾

The (human) self is inclined to evil. (Surat Yusuf: 53)

Now is the time to subdue and defeat that Nafs. As the Shaytaan is shackled, you need to shackle your Nafs al-Ammaarah Bis-Soo' (the evil inclination). Just like the Shaytaan was shackled, you have to shackle your Nafs al-Ammaarah Bis-Soo'.

Ramadhaan is a therapy for one's Imaan because as time goes by your Imaan wears out. When you wash your clothes and wear them time and time again, you wear them out. When metal comes into contact with air and moisture over time, there is a process of oxidation and when it occurs rust begins to form on the metal. And that is the Hadith of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Abdullah Ibn Umar in at-Tabaraani:

إِنَّ الْإِيمَانَ لَيَخْلُقُ فِي جَوْفِ أَحَدِكُمْ كَمَا يَخْلُقُ الثَّوْبُ ، فَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ أَنْ يُجَدِّدَ
الْإِيمَانَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

Faith wears out of the heart like any one of your clothes wear out, so ask Allah to renew your faith in your hearts. You ask Allah and you act upon it too. Ramadhaan dusts your heart off. It repatches your clothes, it revives your Imaan and it ignites it for a take off. You start off this Imaanic therapy by directing your inclination and fighting your desires, shackling your inclination like the Shaytaan was shackled. If you leave eating and drinking and your wife, which is otherwise Halaal on normal days, this is a boot camp to train you never to do what is Haraam throughout the entire year.

You must understand an important concept in your relationship with Allah. The process starts with you, you have to take the first step forward. In the Hadith al-Qudsi, Allah said I am as my servant thinks of Me, I am with him when he mentions Me. You have to mention Him first. If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself. Who starts? He said if you mention. And if he mentions me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly greater than that.

إِذَا تَقَرَّبَ الْعَبْدُ إِلَيَّ شِبْرًا تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ ذِرَاعًا...

If he comes near to me a hand's length, I come to him an arm's length or a cubit.

وَأِذَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ ذِرَاعًا تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ بَاعًا...

And if he comes to me a cubit's length, I go to him the distance of two outstretched arms.

وَأِذَا أَتَانِي يَمْشِي أَتَيْتُهُ هَرْوَلَةً...

And if he comes to walking, I come to him at the speed of running.

In every sentence of the Hadith, the relationship starts with you and then Allah responds. It is consistent in the verses of the Qur'an.

... ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ... ﴿غافر: ٦٠﴾

"Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism)] (and ask Me for anything) I will respond to your (invocation)." (Surat Ghaafir: 60)

You have to invoke Me, then I will answer. You start the invocation, then Allah will give you.

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرُكُمْ ... ﴿البقرة: ١٥٢﴾

Remember Me, I will remember you. (Surat al-Baqarah: 152)

You have to start it, so you have to start your relationship with Allah. Ramadhaan is the season to ignite your longing to Allah. Just like when winter approaches, you go and ignite your furnace, you have to ignite your longing and yearning to Allah. Ignite your longing and yearning to Allah so you can do the worship in this month with pleasure, delight and enjoyment. If you do not ignite your longing to Allah, you cannot do your worship in joy. We want you not only to worship Allah, but we want you to do it with enjoyment.

There is a difference between one who fasts and hates it (wrong doers), one who just fasts and the one who fasts and enjoys it.

...فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ...

﴿فاطر: ٣٢﴾

And among them is he who wrongs himself, and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allah. (Surat al-Faatir: 32)

There are some who follow the middle course and then there is the third category above all that, the supreme one who fasts and enjoys it. Saabiqun Bil-Khayraat (سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ), the ones who are the foremost in their good deeds. There is one who does Taraweeh and Qiyaam and he cannot wait for the Imaam to do Salaam, one who does it just to do it, and there is another one who does it and he is excited as he is standing before Allah. Some are superficial and traditional in their worship. Others enjoy it when their stomach is rumbling, gurgling and growling, because his mind escapes his body in realising how beautiful this fast is. He realises how much he loves the One he is leaving all these desires for. His stomach is growling but his heart is laughing at how much further and further this is taking him from Jahannam, and how further and further it is

getting him to Firdaws. He stands on his feet the long hours, excited, enthusiastic and eager because his mind is with the reward of where this stand is going to land him. A palace, and the ceiling of it is the 'Arsh of Allah, neighbouring Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala in Jannah. That is why you need to ignite your longing to Allah in order to enjoy your Ibaadah, and Inshaa Allah we will talk about that in one of the sessions.

Yearning to Allah

One should do his worship longing and yearning to Allah, to jump to His worship. And worship, it is a meeting between you and Allah so look forward to it. Look at the story of Musa 'alayhis-salaam when he had a meeting with Allah. Allah quotes him as saying, he himself says to Allah:

...وَعَجِلْتُ إِلَيْكَ رَبِّ لِتَرْضَى طه : ٨٤ ﴿﴾

And I hastened to You, O my Lord, that You might be pleased. (Surat Taha: 84)

And that is our topic. After Allah destroyed Fir'awn, Allah made an appointment with Musa 'alayhis-salaam and Bani Israel (the Children of Israel), and that is where Allah spoke to him by the mountain and where he asked to see Allah, and where he was given the Tawraah. When he left Bani Israel back with Haroon 'alayhis-salaam and the appointment with Allah got closer, Musa 'alayhis-salaam quickly hastened his footsteps and sped to the meeting. Musa 'alayhis-salaam could have walked slowly, sluggishly. The appointment is set with Allah, the appointment is not going to be missed. But Musa 'alayhis-salaam sped because he longed to Allah and he was eager to speak to Allah. You have five daily meetings with Allah, not even that, you have every single minute of Ramadhaan as a meeting with Allah. You can walk sluggishly to it, you can sprint to it, and you can cancel the meeting altogether. It is your choice.

What made Musa 'alayhis-salaam hasten to the meeting with Allah? That is because he enjoyed it. He enjoyed a meeting with Allah, to converse with Allah, he enjoyed worship. You will not enjoy worship unless you ignite your longing and yearning and love to Allah. If someone responds to another who he loves, he responds to something they ask without that hasten and spark, that special excitement, you call that cold love, love with no flavour or taste. Your Ibadaah (worship) is your main course, you sprinkle that main course with longing and yearning to Allah so you can add excitement when you perform it.

Let us diagnose why we lose our longing and yearning to Allah. As times passes, your heart gets Raan on it, as Allah said:

كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۖ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ المطففين: ١٤ ﴿﴾

Nay! But on their hearts is the Raan (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they used to earn. (Surat al-Mutaffifeen: 14)

Raan (ران) are little black dots that are put on a heart every time one commits a sin. For some, they are washed away when they repent. And for others, it becomes a black heart like a crow. Now is the prosperous season to wash that Raan away. That rust needs to

be deoxidized and those clothing need to be refurbished. You need to revive your longing to Allah, it may be dead but this is something you can bring back to life. It may be covered, but you can always clean it up.

HOW DO I REVIVE MY LONGING TO ALLAH?

In these few moments, let us take four quick steps to doing so.

TAKE THE QUR'AN TO HEART

Recite the Qur'an, understand the meaning and contemplate it, and understand the names and qualities of Allah as you read the Qur'an. Read the translation when you read the Qur'an, if you do not know the Arabic meaning. Read the Tafseer, we all have Tafseer Ibn Katheer and it has been translated, one of the greatest achievements. Hearts have a lock and you must break that lock to understand Qur'an.

أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾ محمد: ﴿٢٤﴾

Do they not comprehend the Qur'an or is it that they have locks on their hearts? (Surat Muhammad: 24)

This verse does not mean to ask a question, it means to state. To state, do they not comprehend the Qur'an because they have locks on their hearts. When you read the Qur'an, do not be mindless of it. It is very easy to read the Qur'an, it is very easy to praise and glorify Allah, but your mind could be wandering somewhere else and that is what is difficult.

...وَلَا تُطِيعُ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا... ﴿٢٨﴾ الكهف: ﴿٢٨﴾

And obey not those whose hearts We have made heedless of Our remembrance. (Surat al-Kahf: 28)

Why did He say do not obey those whose hearts are heedless? Because many tongues remember Allah a lot but there are few hearts that tag along with the tongue.

Look at an ideal example of how you should read the Qur'an, the example of Abud-Dahdaah radhiallahu 'anhu and how Qur'an incited him to act when he heard one verse.

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا... ﴿٢٤٥﴾ البقرة: ﴿٢٤٥﴾

Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan? (Surat al-Baqarah: 245)

Who wants to loan Allah? When Abud-Dahdaah heard it, he asked the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, he said Allah wants a loan from us O Prophet? Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said yes. Abud-Dahdaah said give me your hand O Prophet of Allah, I give you a commitment to loan my orchard of dates. Abud-Dahdaah gave his entire, his best orchard of dates, six hundreds palms to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Abud-Dahdaah had many farms, he was wealthy. He went to the best one. You know which one? The one he and his own family were living in, and he told his wife pack up and let us go. Let us go, I have loaned this property to Allah and it no longer belongs to us. What do you think his wife said? Did she nag and complain? Why, what is going on? I am not going to say she did not even nag or complain, but rather she got up and took the children by the hand. The property has been loaned out and what is in the property is going with the property. She took the dates out of the mouths and sleeves of her children and led them out of the garden.

To long and yearn to Allah is to understand the word of Allah, let there be no hesitation nor any resistance in accepting and applying what is in the Qur'an. When the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam heard what he did he said:

كَمْ مِنْ عِذْقٍ رَدَاحٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لِأَبِي الدَّحْدَاحِ

Radaah (رداح) means huge date clusters. How many huge date clusters are there in Jannah for Abud-Dahdaah.

REMEMBER THE BLESSINGS AND PROVISION OF ALLAH

The second way to dust off your longing, yearning and love to Allah is to remember the countless blessings and provision of Allah over you. Humans have a tendency and a nature that Allah put within them to like those who do good for them. One shows good gratitude, gratefulness and appreciation over one who gives a bouquet of flowers or gives him help in getting a job. Sometimes it is a matter less than that and sometimes it is a matter more than that, yet Allah gave you more than all that and that which no one else could give you. There are plenty of verses in the Qur'an on hearing, on the tongue, on eyesight, on the sky, on the Earth, on the night and the day. Why do you think there are so many verses in the Qur'an that mention the blessings of Allah to us? To make this meaning surface in our hearts so our longing for Allah can illuminate in our hearts.

The more you know and the more you realise the blessings of Allah upon you, the more you long to thank Him. Sit everyday for a few moments and contemplate the blessings Allah gave you and your family. Look at those around you who have nothing and sit and think of Allah, that will ignite your love and yearning to Allah. Alhamdulillah, I woke up at peace when others are terrorised in prisons and under bombs. Alhamdulillah, I woke up safely in my home. Alhamdulillah, I am healthy in my body. Alhamdulillah, I have my provision for the day. Listen to the Hadith. Whomever wakes up safely in his home,

healthy in his body and has his provision for the day, it is as if he has acquired all worldly possessions.

REGRET AND REPENT

Liven your heart and longing to Allah by regretting the past that went either in vain, you have to regret that, the past that went with no worship and the past that went with some sins. Regret it enough to ignite repentance, which entails yearning to worship Allah. After you remember, regret and repent, put a period there. Put a period on your past and start a new sentence, flip the page and start on a new page. Now, your aim is to catch up and be better than ever and better than anyone else.

REMEMBER THE FOREMOST

Remember the foremost so you can be with the foremost and compare yourself to them, that will spark a feeling to urge you to compete with them.

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ... ﴿آل عمران: ١٣٣﴾

And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 133)

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ... ﴿الحديد: ٢١﴾

Race one with another in hastening towards forgiveness from your Lord (Allah). (Surat al-Hadeed: 21)

...وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿المطففين: ٢٦﴾

And in Jannah, let the competitors compete. (Surat al-Mutaffifeen: 26)

Yes, in the levels of Jannah you need to compete. Longing and yearning to Allah is like fuel for your Imaan. It entices you to worship Allah ecstatically, with pleasure and delight. When the spark in your worship fades, when the longing to Allah dims in your heart, remember the ultimate destiny you are trying to achieve and get. The destiny of those whose love, long, and yearn for Allah.

REMEMBER THIS HADITH

Post this Hadith that I am going to say in your mind, and in front of your computer, in your house and in your bedroom, and most importantly never let it get out of your heart.

In Sahih Muslim, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى تُرِيدُونَ شَيْئًا أَزِيدُكُمْ...

When those who deserve Paradise enter Paradise, Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala will ask, do you wish Me to give you anything more?

Everyone is occupied in the happiness and joy of Jannah.

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغْلٍ فَاكِهُونَ ﴿يس: ٥٥﴾

Verily, the dwellers of the Paradise, that Day, will be busy in joyful things. (Surat Yaseen: 55)

...فَيَقُولُونَ أَلَمْ تُبَيِّضْ وُجُوهَنَا...

The people will say, have you not brightened our faces?

...أَلَمْ تُدْخِلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ وَتُنَجِّنَا مِنَ النَّارِ...

Have you not made us enter Paradise and saved us from Jahannam?

...فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ فَمَا أُعْطُوا شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ

Allah will lift the veil from their eyes and everything given to them will be nothing compared to the sight of their Lord.

Long and yearn to the mercy of Allah, to the meeting of Allah, to seeing Allah in Jannah and to Firdaws. To Firdaws, so the ceiling of your palace will be the throne of Allah. Your aim this Ramadhaan is to have the throne of Allah as your ceiling, that is going to be the top of your ceiling. And from your sides and in your neighbourhood, you are

going to try to be as close to the Waseelah as possible. You want to be in the neighbourhood of Abu Bakr and Umar, Uthman, Ali, Khalid, Abu Ubaydah, Aishah, Khadeejah, Umm Salamah and Safiyyah radhiallahu ‘anhum ajma’een.

That is how you achieve your longing to Allah. In conclusion, know that in your path to igniting this desire to Allah, you are going to come across bandits of the hearts that we always mention. The jobs, prestige, money, children and spouses. Some may be pleasure and delight but do not let them be a Fitnah.

Secrets With Allah

All of our deeds at all times must be solely for the sake of Allah. You do not give any portion of your deeds to other than Allah, not for Riyaa' (show off) or anything else.

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ... ﴿البينة: ٥﴾

And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him). (Surat al-Bayyinah: 5)

One of the best cures for those who struggle or think they struggle with show off is to establish in your heart that in this simple world people run into trials and tribulations by the Qadhaa' and Qadar of Allah and everyone here and everywhere can tell you of times where people turned away, in minor and major difficulties they went through. People turned away and left them alone. If they are not going to stand in this simple world, why would you give them some of your most valuable assets (your deeds) when the only One who will be there for you and worthy of your deeds is Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala, both in this life and in the life after. Secret, discreet, sincere deeds between you and Allah are what you ask Allah with when you are in a desperate need both in this life and for matters of the life after.

You know the story in Sahih Muslim of the three men who sought refuge in a cave when it began to rain. As they entered the cave, it closed upon them. One of the three men said get up each one of you and make Du'aa through your deeds so Allah can rescue us. So the first man got up and said O Allah my children wept at my feet because I did not deem it advisable to serve milk to them, because when I returned from work late I found my parents were sleeping. O Allah I remained at my parents' head as my children wept all night long until daylight broke out and I fed them, then I fed my kids. O Allah if I did that for Your pleasure and Your sake and Your sake only, grant us riddance from this trouble that we are in O Allah. The rock slipped away a little, but not enough for any of them to leave.

Note how he said if I did it for Your sake and Your sake only. Yes it was the deed he did but it is also the sincerity of that deed, the secretiveness of that deed. The next one gets up, he says O Allah I had a cousin that I wanted to have relationship with and she refused. One day she fell on a hardship, she said I need to borrow one hundred Dinaar and I agreed to give her one hundred Dinaar if she had relationship with me. He said O Allah when I approached her for intercourse, she said servant of Allah, fear Allah (إتقِ الله)

and do not break this seal of chastity except by its lawful means. Yaa Allah I got up, O Allah if I did that for Your sake and Your sake only, grant us riddance from the trouble and problem that we are facing. It opened a little bit, not enough.

Likewise the third man gets up, the third one says O Allah I had a worker, he did not take his wages for that day. He left some of his rice, so I planted it and I became rich with flocks of cows and sheep from that investment. He returned to me later and he said fear Allah and give me my wages, so I told him that flock of sheep and cows are all yours.

He said fear Allah and do not mock me, he said O Allah I told him I am not mocking you. Yaa Allah if I did that for Your sake and Your sake only then remove this hardship that we are facing. The rock moved away and they were finally able to leave from the cave.

You want that to happen to you? It is not impossible, that is why the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam taught us this. If you want that to happen to you, Ramadhan is the best time to stock up on secretive, sincere deeds. Let nobody know about them, you yourself try to forget about them. The days go by, life is pregnant with its trials and tribulations, after years maybe a child will get sick, maybe cancer, pain, poverty, may Allah safeguard all of you from all that. Then you raise your hand, you say O Allah I have that deed and I did it in secrecy and sincerely for Your sake, O Allah grant me riddance from this trouble that I am facing. Or forget about it all together and let Allah remind you of it when it is placed in your scale on the balance on Judgment Day. Wallahil-'Adheem Allah will remind you of it.

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ
مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ ﴿الأنبياء: ٤٧﴾

And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We as Reckoners. (Surat al-Anbiyaa': 47)

Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah said deeds without sincerity are like a traveller who carries a water jug full of dirt, carrying that jug burdens him and does not bring him no benefit. What a statement, what an amazing statement. Deeds without sincerity are like a traveller who carries a water jug full of nothing but dirt, carrying it burdens him and brings no benefit.

Dawood Ibn Abi Hind fasted for forty years, his own wife did not know about it. He was a wool maker and his wife would prepare some food for him and send him off when he leaves to work. He would give it to a poor man in the market and return at night after Maghrib to break his fast with his wife. The people in the market think that he ate with his wife, and the wife thinks that he ate from that which she prepared for him, which he gave to a poor man. Sincerity, that is what it was about. He prayed Qiyaam for twenty years, his wife did not know about it, Ikhlāas.

Ayyub as-Sakhtiyaani used to pray the entire night and then a few moments before Fajr he would raise his voice in recitation, in Qur'an, so people would think he got up just a few moments before Fajr when he in reality never even got any sleep all night long. Hassaan Ibn Abi Sinaan, his wife said my husband used to trick me like we parents trick their kids. He used to trick me to sleep and when I would sleep, he would get up and pray. One time she caught him, she said Abu Abdillah with his Kunyah, why do you punish yourself like this? Easy on yourself. He said woe to you woman, you want me to sleep, I will sleep and I am going to sleep and get my rest on a day when I will never wake up from my sleep.

Zayn al-'Aabideen the great grandson of Ali Ibn Abi Talib radhiallahu 'anhu, he used to feed poor people in Madinah for ten years, nobody knew who was bringing them food. Every day in the morning they would find food in front of their houses. When Zayn al-'Aabideen died, they figured out it was him because no longer did they get any food. And more so when they washed him and shrouded him, they found marks in his back from carrying the bags to the poor people.

Al-A'mish said I visited Ibraheem an-Nakha'ee and he began to read Qur'an and he constantly read Qur'an. Whenever he had guests he would quickly put the Qur'an and hide it away and he would tell me, confide in me, I do not want people to see that I am reading Qur'an. What a difference between them and those who never sweat for the sake of Allah yet bolster about it. Those who bolster about a simple little Khutbah they gave, a couple of orphans they sponsored, maybe a five minute talk or just going for the Taraweeh two or three nights out of Ramadhaan, it is usually those with such deeds that they bolster about that have no effectiveness or sincerity. And it is those with secret deeds that have the effective sincere deeds.

Ibn al-Jawzi Rahimahullah said Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak who died a hundred and eighty one years after the Hijrah, he was a sincere master who feared losing sincerity of his deeds if people knew about his deeds or if they praised him. Na'eem Ibn Hammaad said when Ibn al-Mubaarak read a Hadith he would cry like a camel or a cow when they are being sacrificed, the noise they make when they are being sacrificed. Sufyaan ath-Thawri said I wished for one year of my life I could do the deeds that Ibn al-Mubaarak Rahimahullah did. He said I could not even do three days worth of what Ibn al-Mubaarak does. Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak, a worshipper, an Imaam in knowledge, a man who put his knowledge into action, beneficial knowledge, a Mujaahid.

He went with the Muslim army one time to fend off the Romans and when the armies clashed or are posted up to begin the war, as was the trend back then, a man from each side will start off the fight. So a man from the Romans got up, he said who wants to sword fence with me? Which is the one on one fighting with the sword. One Muslim stood up to him, fought him for a while, he was wounded and the Roman killed him. A second Muslim went up to him, same thing happened. Third Muslim got killed, same thing. The fourth man fought him for some time and killed him. The people crowded around this heroic man to see who he was, 'Abda Ibn Sulaymaan said I was among those who crowded around this hero to see who he was. He turned out to be someone who was masked, he covered his face. He did not want anybody to know who he was, and he walked away from the crowd as if nothing happened. 'Abda said I grabbed his mask and I took it off, and it was no other than Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak. Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak said Abu Umar (the Kuniyah of the man who pulled the mask off), you are among those who expose us? He considered it exposing him.

Commenting on this story, Ibn al-Jawzi said he is a sincere master who feared it would affect his sincerity if anyone ever saw or praised any of his deeds. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said Allah did not raise Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak to the elevated status that he reached, except by secrets he had between him and Allah.

Establish those secrets this month, these days. Ibn al-Jawzi mentioned that al-Hasan al-Basri and Ibn al-Mubaarak, they lived in the same time for a period and they took a walk

one day. When they got to a fountain to drink, it was crowded. Had people known who they were and recognised them, they would have opened the way for them, but no one knew who these men were. Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak reached the fountain, broke through the crowd, reached the fountain, drank and left. And then al-Hasan al-Basri said he looked at me and said this is the right way to live.

Imaam in every aspect that you look at it. They were all Imaams in every aspect, they did not want anything to be known. Secret deeds that no one knows about, tears in the deep darkness of the night, recitation in the deep darkness of the night, Allah will raise your mention and honour in both worlds. Ar-Rabee' Ibn Khuthaym, the worshipper who used to cover his worship so no one would know what he did. When he recited Qur'an and he saw people were about to pass by, he would cover it with his Thobe so no one would know he was reciting.

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ
﴿السجدة: ١٧﴾

No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do. (Surat as-Sajdah: 17)

Why did Allah say hidden? Why is it hidden? They hid their deeds from humans so Allah hid for them a special reward. Reward depends on the kind of deed, you reap what you sow. You hid something, Allah is going to save something hidden for you.

In Sahih Muslim:

رُبَّ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ مَدْفُوعٍ بِالْأَبْوَابِ لَوْ أَقْسَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِأَبْرَهُ

A dishevelled man (أشعث), Aghbar (أغبر) means dusty. Madfoo'in Bil-Abwaab (مدفوع

بالأبواب) meaning he is looked down upon so much that if he knocks on your door, you will not even open the door. He is neglected in society, everyone looks down on him. What about him? The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said if he gives an oath by Allah, Allah will fulfil it. You may think he is a nobody, I may think he is a nobody, but he has got some secrets at home in the dark nights that if he gives an oath to Allah in a Du'aa like fashion, Allah will answer it. Meaning if he says Wallahi Yaa Allah You are going to do this for me, but the intention is of course in Du'aa, it will be answered.

Every single day you say seventeen times:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿الْفَاتِحَةُ: ٥﴾

You (Alone) we worship, and you (Alone) we ask for help (for each and every thing).
(Surat al-Faatihah: 5)

By Fardh you say it seventeen times. Every day you say seventeen times, You alone we worship and You alone we ask for Your help, and tens of more times other than that in Sunnah you say them. Every time you say it, remember to renew your vow that you are only doing this for the sake of Allah and make it as secretive as possible.

For this Ramadhaan, plan and make your deeds secret and establish a secretive relationship with Allah. Worship no one knows but you and Allah, sincerely for the sake of Allah. Keep it hidden, Salah, prayer, Zakah, reciting of the Qur'an, Taraweeh, charity, knowledge or Da'wah. You yourself try to forget it, Wallahi you are going to be reminded of it on the Judgment Day, Wallahil-'Adheem you are going to see its affect in this life. If you are inflicted with a hardship years and years later, raise your hands to Allah and say Yaa Allah I got up every single night of Ramadhaan, no one knew that but me and You. If I did that sincerely for Your sake and Your sake alone, then grant me riddance of this trouble and trial that I am facing.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِكَ وَ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا نَعْلَمُ

Fasting is For Me!

The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said that Allah said:

كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ ، إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي ، وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ

Every good deed of the sons of Adam is for them except fasting, it is for Me and I shall reward the fasting person for it.

The Hadith is in Sahih al-Bukhari and the Hadith is a Hadith Qudsi. Ahaadith al-Qudsiyyah (أحاديث القدسية) are the ones that are revealed to the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam but they are the words of Allah. The difference between them and the Qur’an is that you cannot recite them in Salah and they get a general reward, not the specific reward of the Qur’an where you get ten Hasanaat per letter. And also they get scrutinised like other Ahaadith, so some are accepted and some are rejected. You do not accept automatically a Hadith Qudsi just because it is a Hadith Qudsi, the ‘Ulamaa of Hadith tell you which is authentic and which is not.

WHY DID ALLAH SAY FASTING IS FOR ME?

In this Hadith, Allah said every good deed of the son of Adam is for him except fasting, it is for Me and I shall reward the fasting person for it. All the deeds are for Allah, we know that. That is an established fact but why did He specify fasting here, fasting is for Me? That is the point of our talk today. Fasting is for Me, Allah said that. You may think it is a simple issue but Ahmad Ibn Isma’eel al-Qazweeni in his book Hadhaa’ir Al-Quds (حظائر

القدس) mentioned fifty five scholarly opinions as to this matter, Ibn Hajr mentioned ten.

In these few moments, we will discuss some of the popular opinions so we can achieve our goal of understanding the Hadith and understanding fasting better.

THERE IS NO RIYAA’ IN FASTING

Every good deed of the sons of Adam is for him except fasting, it is for Me. That is our point, I reiterate that is our point. Al-Maaziri, al-Qurtubi, Ibn al-Jawzi and others said that fasting was specified in this Hadith and Allah attributed it to Himself because fasting has no Riyaa’. It has no eye service, no hypocrisy, no dissimulation, it has no showing off in it. Fasting is a special worship between you and Allah, there is no show off in it unless you speak about it, unlike other matters of worship. If you give charity, if you lecture, if you offer Salah, if you perform Hajj, if you are dutiful to your parents, if you are good to your neighbours, and other matters of worship, they are apparent and there may be a show off aspect in them because people see them. The act itself can be

for show and one at times needs to struggle with himself to purify his intention, to eliminate the show off aspect of these worships.

In fasting, it is different. A man fasting to show off while his stomach is full, a fake, looks and appears to the public like one who is sincerely fasting for the sake of Allah, a genuine Muslim. Both appear to the public as not eating, they do not eat, no one knows the reality of the matter but Allah. One can be fasting a Nafil, a Sunnah, a non obligatory outside Ramadhaan and no one knows that but Allah, and one can break his obligatory fast in Ramadhaan and no one knows about it but Allah. Fasting in itself is a silent and private Ibaadah no one knows about unless you speak about it.

Let me make it clear in an example, a story that I once read. There was a line at a meat market once and a man from back of the line told the butcher, he said hurry up, I have to get home and cook the meat before Maghrib because I am fasting today. So an unwise man behind him who was possibly worse than him told him, he said you want him to rush and you are only fasting one day, I have been fasting three days and I wait in line all day long and I have not asked him. The point of that is Allah covered the matter, no one would have known that. Had both of them not spoken, no one would have known about it. It is a matter only Allah knows, so that is one of the scholarly explanations of this Hadith, that fasting is for Me and I shall reward for it.

There is a weak saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam that there is no show off in fasting.

الصِّيَامُ لَا رِيَاءَ فِيهِ

It is weak and it cannot be used. However, had it been authentic, it would have been a decisive matter in the interpretation of this Hadith. So this first opinion, and you learn from every one of these opinions, is that unlike other matters, fasting is a worship that does not have a show off aspect to it, it is very unique and special in that matter.

FASTING IS AMONG THE MOST BELOVED IBAADAAT TO ALLAH

The second opinion of why Allah chose fasting to attribute it to Himself over other Ibaadaat, is because fasting is among the most beloved worships to Allah. Salah is among the most beloved type of worships to Allah. In an authentic Hadith, Ahmad Shaakir said it is an authentic Hadith:

خَيْرَ أَعْمَالِكُمُ الصَّلَاةَ

The best of your deeds is Salah. But so is fasting because in another Hadith, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

عليك بالصيام فإنه لا عدل له

The Prophet told a man to fast because there is no equivalent to fasting.

Fasting is considered among the best of all Ibaadaat because it raises fear of Allah in one's self. Fasting is unique in that it livens and deepens the love and fear of Allah. Fasting embeds fear of Allah in your heart because Allah said about fasting, it is to establish Taqwa:

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٨٣﴾

That you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious). (Surat al-Baqarah: 183)

In the verses about fasting. Awareness that Allah sees and hears you, and knows of you constantly. You have to be on alert constantly knowing that Allah is watching you, that is why you do not go near your wife, that is why you do not go near the fridge. So the first opinion is that there is an aspect of sincerity in fasting and lack of show off in fasting. The second opinion is that it is among the most beloved Ibaadaat to Allah.

NO ONE KNOWS THE REWARD OF FASTING BUT ALLAH

The third opinion as to why Allah said fasting is for Me, is because no one knows the reward of fasting but Allah, and this is also the second sentence of the Hadith. All deeds have a specified amount of reward, except fasting. In Sahih Muslim, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said every deed has ten to seven hundred folds except fasting, it is for Allah. No one knows or calculates fasting but Allah. No one knows the specific reward of fasting but Allah. No one calculates the multiple folds on top of the regular reward, but Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala.

You can see possibly in the Hadith that I mentioned where one gets ten to seven hundred folds of reward in all deeds except fasting, meaning that Inshaa Allah fasting is even way more than seven hundred. Wallahi, one who contemplates and thinks about that fully, will make most of his life a Ramadhaan. When a king or prominent person or an employer on this earth gives a gift, he gives it in such generosity to suit the position he is in. So imagine the King of all kings when He says fasting, I got you on that reward.

FASTING REQUIRES ALL THREE TYPES OF PATIENCE

The fourth reason why Allah said fasting is for Me, patience is three types, fasting requires all three types of patience. There is patience in obedience to Allah, there is patience in refraining from Haraam and there is patience in Qadhaa' and Qadar (decree and destiny). Unlike many matters of Ibaadah and worldly matters where one type of patience is needed, in fasting you need all three of them.

Number one, you need patience in refraining from Haraam. How does it pertain to fasting? You have to refrain from food, you have to refrain from drinking, you have to refrain from relationship with your wife. Food, drink and relationship with your wife is Haraam during the day of Ramadhaan, so one needs to be patient in that. One needs to

be patient in refraining from other Haraam like backbiting, speaking ill, speaking evil and lying. Those that are Haraam on regular days, but more so on days that one is fasting in them. It takes a lot of patience for one on a night of Ramadhaan where there is a gathering that consists of nothing but slander and backbiting, to stand up and walk away.

In fasting, you also need patience in doing the ordains, the second type of patience. One needs patience to fast in obedience to Allah, especially when the Nafs (one's self inclination) may at times dislike fasting due to its hardship. He uses patience to fast, to resist that Nafs, that self inclination.

...النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةً بِالسُّوءِ... ﴿يُوسُفُ: ٥٣﴾

The (human) self is inclined to evil. (Surat Yusuf: 53)

One disliking fasting because it is from Allah, that is totally different. The deeds of that person vanish and he needs to take his Shahaadah again. But there are matters like fasting that are heavy on one's self and he needs patience to endure them.

And the third type of patience is patience in decree and destiny, and you need that in fasting. Allah decreed hot days, you have to fast in them, you accept the decree of Allah. Sometimes you have to go to work, sometimes you become lazy or bored or thirsty, yet you accept the decree of Allah and you fast. You go through that because you know Allah decreed that for you. Allah decreed that hot day, Allah decreed that you are not going to be as energetic on that day at work, so you accept that decree. When fasting contains all three types of patience, you need all three types of patience, the reward is supreme. So that is why Allah attributed fasting to Himself and to give the amount that He said:

وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ

I am the One who is going to give that reward for that matter.

ALLAH HONOURS FASTING BY ATTRIBUTING IT TO HIMSELF

A fifth reason some of the 'Ulamaa mention as to why Allah said fasting is for Me, they said it is because Allah honours fasting with that. You know how you say Baytullah (the house of Allah), you honour the house of Allah. When you say the she-camel of Allah:

...نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا ﴿الشَّمْسُ: ١٣﴾

"[Do not harm] the she-camel of Allah or [prevent her from] her drink." (Surat ash-Shams: 13)

As in the Qur'an many times, you honour the camel by saying that. The rule of Usool in specialising a matter that is otherwise general, means to honour it. We know the

Masaajid are Masaajid but when Allah says Baytullah, it is to honour it. When you say Naaqatallah (the camel of Allah), it is to honour it. Zakah, fasting, Salah, all that are worships of Allah, but when it is specialised and when Allah says fasting is for Me, it is to honour that.

Fasting is great and it is supreme. Why? Because it pins down your inclination and desire for the sake of Allah, that is what fasting is about. His wife behind closed doors, he does not touch her. He returns from work on a hot day away from the refrigerator and from food, because he fears Allah. So that requires a lot of reward, and Allah honoured it for that. It cannot be any type of normal reward, so Allah honoured it by saying fasting is for Me and I shall reward for it. This by itself is sufficient honour, grace and merit for those wise to know the value of fasting, in knowing that Allah attributed it to Himself and attributed the reward that He is the only One who is going to give it.

FASTING CANNOT BE TAKEN FROM ON THE JUDGMENT DAY

Finally, a sixth opinion that 'Ulamaa mentioned why Allah attributed fasting to Himself is because on the Judgment Day people who wronged one another, one can take from their deeds. If I got wronged from someone, I take from their deeds on the Judgment Day. Any and all deeds except fasting can be taken from on Judgment Day, this is the opinion of Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyaynah.

Before one passes on to the front yard of Jannah, after he passes as-Siraat there are some who have to go to al-Qantarrah to settle the score and it is not a money score that they settle, it would be easy if it was money but it is deeds. They have to go on a bridge and they settle it with deeds. If I wronged someone, they take from my deeds. If they wronged me, I take from their deeds. May Allah guard us and save us from that. You have Salah, you have Zakah, you have Hajj, you have Umrah, you have charity, people can take from all that and if all that vanishes, the person who was wronged gets sins taken off of him and they are placed on one who wronged him, except fasting. This is the opinion of Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyaynah, he said fasting is untouched because Allah said fasting is for Me.

THE MUSHRIKEEN DID NOT COMMIT SHIRK IN FASTING

The final opinion we will mention for today is some of the 'Ulamaa said fasting is for Me, Allah specialised it for Himself because the Mushrikeen did not commit Shirk in fasting. It was always only for Allah. What we mean by that is you heard of Mushrikeen who sacrificed for their statues, they gave pledges and oaths for their statues, they prayed in Rukoo' and Sujood for their statues, they feared them and had hope in them, unlike fasting where we never heard of the Mushrikeen fasting for their statues. So the meaning here is that Shirk did not enter in the worship of fasting.

ALLAH IS SHOWING US THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING

Finally, Allah attributed fasting and its reward to Himself to show the importance of fasting, to put your hearts and minds into it, to take this matter of worship seriously. Your days of fasting should not be like any other day, especially in Ramadhaan. Siyaam

is purification, it is a university of Taqwa. It is manners, it is a school you need to value. Imagine the reward, your mother and your father will not be able to help you on that Day, but fasting comes to you on that Day to help you and rescue you. If Muslims realised this virtue of fasting and how Allah honoured it when He attributed it to Himself and how much reward comes out of it, if we understood the value, we would go down in Sujood to Allah thanking Him for making fasting obligatory in this month.

WOMEN IN RAMADHAAN

Some of the most popular questions that I have been getting since the start of Ramadhan pertain to women and the issue of women on their menstrual cycle in this month. Most of our sisters are anguished at being unable to fast while everyone else is enjoying their Ibaadaat, so we will dedicate the few minutes of this Halaqah to that issue. This Halaqah is directed more towards sisters but brothers need to be patient and it is also something they need to know. If they do not have a wife, they have mothers, sisters and aunts, and in the future Inshaa Allah Ta'aala they are going to have daughters so it will be something that they will need to know about.

Let me start off by saying first of all, our sisters should not feel anguished, sad or depressed or think that others beat you in Ibaadah because you were ordered not to fast or pray in Ramadhan by the same One who ordered others to fast and pray. So you are in an Ibaadah (worship) by obedience to Allah.

This is a common feeling among our sisters and it is shared by many of our sisters. And before that, it was shared before that by our mother Aishah radhiallahu 'anha, may Allah grant our sisters lofty palaces next to that of Aishah. In the Hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was heading towards Hajj, when he stopped in an area called Sarif on the outskirts of Makkah. He saw Aishah was weeping and crying, he said what is the matter? She said I wish I had not made Hajj this year. And the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam immediately knew what she was talking about so he asked her, maybe you got your menses? Aishah replied yes. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam then comforted and consoled her, he told her this is a thing which Allah has ordained and decreed on all the daughters of Adam. After he comforted her, then he gave her the ruling. He said do that which pilgrims do except do not perform your Tawaaf around the Ka'bah until you are clean. Pay attention to that statement because we are going to refer to it a few times through this class, do that which pilgrims do except performing Tawaaf around the Ka'bah until you are clean. So it is the feeling of agony our sisters go through of not being able to do significant, special worships like the rest of the Ummah in blessed times and in blessed situations.

THE REWARD FOR ONE WHO IS PREVENTED FROM IBAADAH FOR A LEGITIMATE REASON

Rest assured without a doubt that any sister who truly, genuinely and sincerely was going to an Ibaadah such as fast and pray (both Fardh and Nafl) yet the only thing that stopped her short of that was getting her monthly days, then she will get the full reward Inshaa Allah, not a tiny bit less than if she had done it.

Listen to this Hadith:

إِذَا مَرَضَ الْعَبْدُ أَوْ سَافَرَ ، كُتِبَ لَهُ مِثْلَ مَا كَانَ يَعْمَلُ مُقِيمًا أَوْ صَحِيحًا

In Sahih al-Bukhari, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said if one gets sick or travels, he will get the same reward as he was when he was not travelling and healthy.

He was deprived for a legitimate reason so he will get the reward, the reward continues on. A woman in her days is no different than that, you can take the Hadith to mean if a woman is on her menstrual cycle, she will get the same reward of deeds as if she had fasted. When one is deprived of Ibaadah because of something beyond their means, they will get the reward for deeds they missed out on because it was not by their choice. The Hadith mentioned if one gets sick, they will get their deeds of Ibaadah they missed out because they are sick. One who is on her monthly days is very similar, near identical to that. The common denominator is both cannot perform their Ibaadah and they cannot perform it by force and not by choice. Ibn Hajr said this Hadith applies to anyone who otherwise would perform a deed, yet is not able to continue for circumstances beyond their means.

There are several Ahaadith indicating that if one is not able to perform worship due to circumstances not under their control, the reward of it will continue on, they will get the reward. Even in Jihad, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam one time left for a battle and he left men behind in Madinah. He told the people with him, those men who did not join us, not a step you took or a valley you crossed except they will get the identical reward as you because they were held back for a legitimate reason.

The point of all this is do not feel sad, distressed or agonised. Sisters who do not do their Ibaadah are doing worship because Allah told them not to do so, and they will get the Ajr Inshaa Allah Ta'aala if they are sincere.

CAN A SISTER TAKE A PILL TO DELAY HER MENSTRUAL CYCLE?

The simple answer is yes. Why? Matters like these fall under general rule in Islam of being Halaal unless proven Haraam. The only one I have read and know of that considered it prohibited was Imaam Malik. He considered it prohibited but he also stated the reason was because it causes harm. That is a totally different reason, if it causes harm. In al-Mughni he quoted Imaam Ahmad as permitting it and likewise, ash-Shaafi'ee permitted it. It is very clear it is permissible unless it causes harm, that is a totally different story. You have to do your homework and make sure it does not cause harm to you.

In fact I remember when I was ten or maybe eleven years old, Wallahi I remember I sat with my father in one of his Halaqah in the Haram in Madinah, Shaykh 'Atiyyah Saalim Rahmatullahi 'Alayhi and he mentioned a Hadith that stuck in my mind about Miswaak and one of the benefits of Miswaak. I later read in Musannaf Abdur-Razzaaq, when 'Amr said that Ibn Umar was asked can a woman take medication to delay her menstrual cycle. Ibn Umar said there is no problem and he recommended the soup or water of Miswaak, so they had this back in the days. What they did was bring a Miswaak and you make sure it is an Araak Miswaak, the original Miswaak, the right main tree and not similar close plants. They cut it into small pieces, boiled it in a pot for what today would be about ten minutes and you drink it two to three times a day starting on the day before you expect the menstrual cycle to begin.

I am not sure if that works with the Miswaaks we have now because I label them as expired Miswaaks. The Miswaaks that I used to get in Madinah, I used to buy them from sellers who would freshly cut them days before they sold them. Some types have a strong natural taste, a peppermint like flavour that is sometimes so strong that you could not even keep the Miswaak in your mouth for a few minutes. That is natural, not something they added.

Another side issue and I do not want to get distracted with it, but let me mention it. In the Common Mistakes During Ramadhan article that was taken from our Fiqh classes, I said I do not feel that toothpaste is even Makrooh, it is Mubaah actually based on Qiyaas (analogy). Miswaak is permissible throughout the day when you are fasting, even towards the late evening, and the Miswaak at times has a stronger taste than the toothpaste, so that was the rationale behind it.

The Miswaaks we get here are outdated, even if you buy them overseas sometimes, many of them are also outdated as well. Going back to our topic, I know that the soup of Miswaak was used in the old days as means for delaying the cycle. However, I am not sure in this day and age if these Miswaaks that come to us will have any affect because of the time since they were cut. They are old and they are like I said, expired. It is worth a try and if it works let us know, we will pass the word on.

WHAT CAN A WOMAN DO DURING THESE DAYS?

She can do everything except fast, make Salah or make Tawaaf if she goes to Umrah. She makes up her fasts but she does not make up her Salah. She can do everything else. What happens and it is a problem is that some sisters think it is that time of the month when they do not fast so Ramadhan is on pause. They go sit in front of the TV and neglect these blessed days. Yes you cannot fast, you cannot pray, but you are still in blessed days and there is plenty of other Ibaadaat to do. There is Dhikr, exert your energy in Du'aa, you can recite the Qur'an, which brings us to the next point. Can a woman recite Qur'an and can she touch the Qur'an? Both are disputed.

CAN A WOMAN RECITE THE QUR'AN?

As to reciting the Qur'an from her memory without touching, there is a dispute on that and the correct opinion is that which Ibn Taymiyyah states in the 21st volume of the Fataawa. Imaam Malik, ash-Shawkaani and others adopted same opinion that it is permissible for a woman to read from memory or if she is not touching the Qur'an. The origin is that matters like these are Halaal unless proven by a solid proof that they are Haraam, and there is no solid proof. Let me repeat that, there is no solid, authentic proof to indicate it is Haraam for a woman to recite the Qur'an. Imaam Malik, Imaam Ahmad, ash-Shawkaani and Ibn Taymiyyah said a woman can read from memory because these are matters that can be prohibited with solid proof and there is no solid proof on that, and that is correct.

There is a saying attributed to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam that a woman on her menstrual cycle cannot read Qur'an. That is in Ibn Maajah and at-Tirmidhi but it is so weak that you cannot even attribute it to the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Some used analogy to compare a woman to a man who is on his major impurity (Junub). We have an authentic, clear Hadith stating that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did not recite while he was Junub. However, in order to compare a male who is on a major impurity to a woman on her menstrual cycle, it must be similar in order for Qiyaas (analogy) to take place. A man who is Junub (on his major impurity) is by choice, not by force. He can get his lazy self up and go take a shower, while a woman is not like that. She is forced to wait, so there is differences that invalidate the use of analogy and Qiyaas.

A woman getting her monthly days is a matter that happens to all women, since the time of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and even before that. There was many Muslim women then and the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam had many wives radhiyallahu 'anhunna who taught us the outmost, deep details of life of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and their lives. Do you think we would not have had at least one solid, authentic Hadith that it is Haraam if it was really Haraam?

CAN SHE READ FROM THE QUR'AN BY TOUCHING IT?

This matter goes back to the root issue of whether one can touch the Qur'an while he is impure. The great, overwhelming majority of the 'Ulamaa say that one must be pure. The minority say it is permissible for one to touch the Qur'an if they are impure, and among them is Ibn Abbaas, ash-Sha'bi, ad-Dahhaak, al-Hakm Ibn 'Utaybah, Hamaad Ibn Abi Sulaymaan, Dawood adh-Dhaahiree and adh-Dhaahiriyyah. However, we do not go by vote, we go by proof, it is not a democracy here.

In my second year of Sharee'ah study when I was in Madinah, I had to do a short essay on every class that we took. I think it was fifteen pages or so and for my Fiqh class my teacher told me your topic is this, you have to write on this. That was in the early nineties and with Islamic knowledge, as long as you continue to research you develop and grow in your knowledge over time. And as time goes by you find the Hadith you missed out on, the opinion you did not know of or did not take heed of, you find that the Hadith you thought was authentic turned out to be weak or the opposite, but since then until today I stick behind the conclusion I put in the final sentence of my thesis on this issue. I said the conclusion is, every explicit, direct saying on this matter is not authentic and that which is authentic is not explicit. Let me repeat, every explicit saying on this matter is not authentic and that which is authentic is not explicit.

For example, there is many non authentic Hadith, but there is one proof that many use which is a verse in the Qur'an. It is on the tip of the tongues of the people who use this as proof.

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ﴿الواقعة: ٧٩﴾

A book none can touch but the purified. (Surat al-Waaqi'ah: 79)

Ibn Abbaas said this is the book in the heavens, the Lawh al-Mahfoodh. It is not even talking about the Qur'an, it is referring to the angels and the Preserved Tablets in the Lawh al-Mahfoodh, not us and the Qur'an.

And even more so, you do not use Mutahhar (مطهر) for the word purified in Arabic, except for those who are infallible. Me and you, you do not use that word for us. Even though similar to the word pure that we use, when we make Wudhu we use Mutatahhir not Mutahhar. Mutahhar is for those who are infallible like the angels.

More so, the first Hadith that I mentioned to you, when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told Aishah do everything women do except Tawaaf and Salah. During Hajj people read Qur'an and they touch it, and they did it every single day, more so in Hajj of course. So why did the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam not tell her do not touch the Qur'an and do not recite the Qur'an?

There is one authentic Hadith in al-Haakim, Ahmad, Maalik and others:

لَا يَمَسُّ الْقُرْآنَ إِلَّا طَاهِرٌ

No one touch the Qur'an but someone pure. But here Taahir could mean pure from Kufr, not necessarily pure from Wudhu.

...إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ... ﴿التوبة: ٢٨﴾

Verily, the polytheists are impure. (Surat at-Tawbah: 28)

That means the believers are pure, so here it could mean the purity of Islam.

There is other Hadith that say:

إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لَا يَنْجُسُ

A Muslim does not become impure.

So it could be the purity of Islam versus Kufr. The Hadith was a letter written from the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to 'Amr Ibn Hizaam when he was living in Najraan among Christians, so it may be that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was directing him not to let non believers touch the pages of the Qur'an.

So basically, there is not authentic, explicit proof to prohibit it and that which is authentic entails other meanings.

THE ISSUE OF RESPECT

Putting the issue of Halaal and Haraam aside on this matter, there is an issue of respect. The Qur'an, the word of Allah needs to be respected. That is a different story. Even though I do not believe there is explicit, authentic Hadith saying that a Muslim must be pure to touch the Qur'an, I do not recall any time from when I was a little kid that I ever while remembering touched the Qur'an while I was not on Wudhu. Even though it is not a must, there is an issue of respect.

ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعِظْ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ ﴿٣٢﴾ الْحَج: ٣٢

And whosoever honours the symbols of Allah, then it is truly from the piety of the heart. (Surat al-Hajj: 32)

Some of the Salaf like Ibn Umar used to make Wudhu before touching the Qur'an. Others out of respect used to make Wudhu, go brush their teeth with a Miswaak, face the Qiblah, sit humbly with respect and recite Qur'an. This is the word of Allah!

A sister may choose to evade this entire dispute and read the Qur'an with some kind of barrier, and that is permissible. Or she can go further and read from an iPhone, an iPad, or a computer because that is not considered a Mushaf. The ruling does not apply on that, that is definitely permissible because the ruling of a Mushaf does not apply on that.

Catch the Breeze!

Ibn Abi ad-Dunya narrated that Maalik Ibn Dinaar and also Mujaahid said the following statement in one chain, and actually this statement is said by more than these two. With a slight variation, you will find al-Hasan al-Basri, Abu Bakr al-Muzani and others said it. The statement is not a day passes by which does not say O son of Adam I have come to you today and I will never return until the Judgment Day, so be careful of what you do during my stay. When that day passes and leaves and it is done with, it is folded up and sealed, never to be reopened again by anyone until Allah reopens it on the Judgment Day. In another statement, al-Hasan al-Basri compared the days like guests. He said the days say O son of Adam I am your guest and guests always leave thanking or vilifying you. They either say he is generous or cheap, they speak good or bad about you. And likewise the days and nights are just like that, meaning they will either testify for you or against you.

Understand that the night and day are like two treasures chests. Be careful what you do with them and be careful how you spend them. Take care of them like you would take care of a treasure. It is as if you were made up of time. Time is your capital and investment. Time is days, days are your life and life is like road, it will either take you to Jannah or to Jahannam wal-'Iyaathu Billah. Nights and days are for worship but more so the nights, and the days are for the market place.

One time I went with Shaykh Ibn Qa'ood to do Hajj with him. May Allah raise his ranks to Jannah, a true Imaam of our time who spoke the truth. He was among the official 'Ulamaa of Ifta years and years ago, actually it is so far back that I do not think anyone here was born when he was in the official Ifta group. He spoke on some matters and then resigned from the Ifta, or more accurately put he was forced to resign. Many say where are the 'Ulamaa that speak the truth? Alhamdulillah as bad as the situation is, this Ummah has righteous 'Ulamaa but the problem is where those people are looking for them. They are looking for them in the wrong places because they are rejected from satellite channels. They are sidetracked and imprisoned by governments who put them down and crush them and promote other ignorant heads, and unfortunately the masses of the Ummah lost the scale of how to find out the genuine 'Ulamaa from the fake ones.

As to Ibn Qa'ood Rahmatullahi 'Alayhi, one of the matters he spoke about back in the days was TV. Back in the seventies and eighties the TV in Sa'oodiyyah was filth, polluting the pure lands of the Haramayn. When we were in Madinah in 1979, I remember it and I recall it very clearly, we were leaving the Haram one day as we did every single day Alhamdulillah Rabbil-'Aalameen. The market was right outside the door unlike how it is today, we walked by the shops and we passed by TV shops that had TVs displayed all throughout the store. They had them on the only government channel they had and it was the only channel in the whole country. In 1979, I remember one day we were walking out of the Haram and it was Donny Osmond on their TV. The TV and the situation of the TV was one of the reasons why the 1979 massacre in Makkah happened, that is one of the reasons Juhaymaan mentioned. So to diffuse the situation, the king had a meeting with the high 'Ulamaa because people listen to the 'Ulamaa. He said wal-Hamdulillah we fixed the TV and now it is Da'wah oriented, to convey it to the

'Ulamaa. It was total silence but then the lion, may Allah raise his rank to Firdaws, had to roar. Ibn Qa'ood got up and said no that is not true, and that was the point that started the feud.

The point of mentioning this is when I did Hajj with him, I was sitting by him one time and a man came to him and asked him. He said Shaykh what is the ruling on TV? The man appeared to be a normal person, he was not a Taalib 'Ilm where the Shaykh would go into details so the Shaykh kept it clear, brief and short in a way the man will understand it. And this pertains to our talk today, that is why I mention it. He said is there anyone with his right mind who knows that his every heartbeat, every exhalation and inhalation, every one of those is counted and fixed, does anyone who realises that wastes his time on any of that filth?

All those statements I mentioned to you by al-Hasan al-Basri, Mujaahid and others, that pertains to regular days. Normal days are precious to a believer, now take it a step further and imagine how valuable it is when the reward is multiple folds like the days we are in today.

Allah gave some months more merit, priority and grace over others months. Look at the four months of al-Ashhur al-Hurum (الأشهر الحرم).

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ ۚ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا
فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ... ﴿التوبة: ٣٦﴾

Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them. (Surat at-Tawbah: 36)

Out of those, a second level is ash-Shahrul-Haraam (الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ).

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ... ﴿البقرة: ١٩٧﴾

Hajj is [during] well-known months. (Surat al-Baqarah: 197)

We have twelve, then four out of that, and then out of that is Dhul-Hijjah and the best month beyond a doubt is:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhaan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

Likewise, some days are better than other days and the nights have merit and priority over the days in matters like Qiyaam.

For example, an oath was given by the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah:

وَالْفَجْرِ ﴿١﴾ وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَالْفَجْرِ

By the dawn. And [by] ten nights. (Surat al-Fajr: 1-2)

And the night of Laylat al-Qadar is better than a thousand nights. Now we are in Ramadhaan and now it is time to catch a whiff of that Ramadhaanic breeze that will not give you a cold, rather it will make you among the most successful there are. What are you talking about Ahmad? A whiff and a breeze, what is that? Let me repeat that. Catch a whiff of that Ramadhaanic breeze that will not give you a cold, rather it will make you among those who will never be wretched. You know how there is a saying when one is in a room temperature and their hair is wet or they are sweating in the gym, they say do not go outside because you are going to catch a cold or you are going to catch your death of cold (especially in our cold weather here). In a Hadith, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam compared the blessed days in general (like that of Ramadhaan or the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah) like a breeze, like a whiff. It is like catching a whiff of perfume, smell it while it lasts because it is soon going to go away. It is like a cold breeze passing by you, within seconds it is going to leave.

This is not going to give you a cold or death. It is going to make you among the happiest there ever was and among those who will never be wretched because the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said in an authentic Hadith in at-Tabaraani, on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Maslamah that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ فِي أَيَّامِ الدَّهْرِ نَفَحَاتٌ...

Nafahaat (نفحات) means breeze, whiffs.

...فَتَعَرَّضُوا لَهَا...

Subject yourself, throw yourself at the wind, extend your arms at the wind.

...فَلَعَلَّ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُ نَفْحَةٌ فَلَا يَشْقَى بَعْدَهَا أَبَدًا

He will never be among the wretched if he catches one of those whiffs.

That is in days where there are multiple folds of Ajr, like that which we are in today (like Ramadhaan, Dhul-Hijjah and Laylat al-Qadar).

A righteous, wise man was once in a funeral procession and he said to the other man next to him, this man that is dead, if he comes back to life, do you think he would do good and better or what do you think he would do? So the other man said of course, there is no doubt about it. He would come back and do better and at least he probably wishes to wake up and do two Rak'aat and then die again. The first one who asked said if it is not him then let it be us, meaning let that be a lesson to us.

When you are overcome with laziness and habits that deter from Ibaadah or the devils of humans and the Jinn that become a barrier from catching that breeze, then resist and revolt against it. We have a solution to every matter in our Deen, our Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did not leave us barbarians. Each one of the solutions to these problems (laziness, boredom or devils of the humans and the Jinn), you could talk about for Halaqaat.

For example, when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam used to get up at night and pray Qiyaam at-Tahajjud, he would start off with two preparatory Rak'aat. Before you work out, when you want to weight lift and when you want to jog, they tell you to stretch out because you are going to pull a muscle. Likewise, you do not want to pull a heart or a soul muscle. The Nafs (the self, the soul) struggles at times to do these ordains and we struggle to do the Nawaafil (the extras). You overcome boredom and laziness by knowing the rewards for all that. Learn about the lives of the Salaf and the examples of the lives of the Salaf. Have righteous friends to compete with and remind each other. Know that the opportunity in this life is very short.

Al-Hasan al-Basri said whoever wants to compete with you on matters of the Deen, go for it and take the challenge. If it is a matter of this Dunya, then throw it in his face and walk away. In this month and time, surround yourself with those who you see are better than you. You do not have to necessarily tell him I am competing with you but take it as a competition.

...وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿المطففين: ٢٦﴾

In that (the matters of the life after) let the competitors compete. (Surat al-Mutaffifeen: 26)

Wallahi it is a race to Allah. Wuhayb Ibn al-Ward said if you can be the first in the race to Allah, be so. Shams ad-Deen Muhammad Ibn Uthman at-Turkistaani said I never heard of anyone doing any matter of worship, except that I did like it or more.

ما بلغني عن أحد من الناس أنه تعبد عبادة إلا تعبدت نظيرها أو زدت عليه

They asked Naafi' how was the life of Umar in the house? Tell us how his life was. He said in his house it was Wudhu and Salah, and in between that it was recitation of Qur'an. When the son of Umar (Abdullah Ibn Umar) used to miss one Salah in congregation, he would fast the following day, free a slave and pray all night. Did you hear that? If he missed a Salah in congregation, and you know Ibn Umar he had to have missed it for a legitimate excuse. These are supreme people who have supreme goals and hold themselves to a high standard.

The point to take away in your pouch today is to understand and comprehend what I advised you, and Allah is my witness that I need this before anyone else. I am only reminding myself speaking out loud, that is all I am doing in reality. Time is more precious than gold and wealth. Some of the Salaf were more generous with their wealth than they were with their time. We have an entire Surah (al-'Asr) to cherish time. That is in normal days so imagine that it is blessed days like these. Days where a deed is worth not between ten to seven hundred, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said deeds are worth folds of ten to seven hundred except Siyaam, so it means over seven hundred Inshaa Allah. Whatever interferes in taking you off the course of Ibaadah, Islam left us a solution on how to deal with it. Warm up for Ibaadah. Remember death, it will kill boredom. Listen to snippets of the lives of the Salaf and those we mentioned, it will overcome laziness. Islam left you a solution for everything.

Last year Ramadhaan it was the year of 1433 Hijrah, today it is 1434. Time flies like an arrow and before you know it, it is going to be 1435 (that is if we reach it). And before you know it, we are all going to be in al-Ghayb. Prepare for it, it is a time to prepare for it.

In conclusion, I will leave you with a fact that I find astonishing. Intend and strive with your deeds completely for the sake of Allah. Your life for Allah and your intention for Allah, and you will get the best of both worlds. That is a fact and a promise. It is like you going to a store to buy something.

...وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَى... ﴿النحل: ٦٠﴾

And Allah has the supreme examples. (Surat an-Nahl: 60)

When you walk in to buy that matter, you go in to buy one. They tell you today we have a special, you buy one and you get one free. And of course I will say again, Allah has the supreme examples. That is how it works in matters of the life after. Are you making this stuff up Ahmad? Our Qur'an told us.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿النحل: ٩٧﴾

Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do. (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

Listen carefully to the translation. Whoever does deeds rightfully (male or female) while he or she is a true believer, verily they will have a good life:

حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً

It means provisions in this life. It means contentment in this life. It means matters of this life. Does it stop there? No.

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

And We shall certainly pay them a reward in proportion to the best of that which they used to do. That part of the verse means Paradise and the Hereafter, so you get the best of both. Intend for the sake of Allah and let your life revolve around Allah, and you will get the best of both worlds. You will get a freebie and Allah started with the freebie, and then mentioned the ultimate goal (the Akhirah).

Let the Competitions Begin!

An important topic and one of the strongest ways for many to charge and ignite their Ibaadah is flipping back the pages of our golden history. There are many, many different ways to charge yourself into doing Ibaadah. We talked about igniting your yearning to Allah so let us talk about igniting your Ibaadah. One of the ways is warm up for Ibaadah (like the two Rak'ah the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did), that gives you energy and excels your Ibaadah. Remembering death kills boredom and blows the sleep away, making room for your Ibaadah. Snippets of the lives of the Salaf overcomes laziness. It energizes, charges and gets one to excel and that is what I wanted to talk about.

Befriend the Salaf. Choose a friend from the Salaf and befriend him. Everyone has stars they look up to and Muslims have the Salaf as stars. Those are our stars. Someone will say how do I befriend the Salaf when they are all dead? Yes they all died (no doubt about it), but their legacy of Ibaadah to imitate and mimic lives on. Today the standards have become so low that if one does not do too many Haraams, he is considered a saint by many. The surrounding status around us has become so low that those who do Sunnah and Nawaafil for their Salah are labelled forerunners in Ibaadah, Saabiqun Bil-Khayraati Bi'ithnillah (سَابِقُ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِثْنِ اللَّهِ). But let us look at our forefathers, the real standards we look up to. I am not going to try to mention any example of their worship in Ramadhaan, I want to give you a glimpse of their life three hundred and sixty five days a year (a normal day to them). And if that is a normal day, let your mind wonder how their nights and days in Ramadhaan were.

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, the supporter of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, the Daa'iyah and one of two people who took Islam all the way to Yemen. Yemen and its surrounding areas, today Abu Musa al-Ash'ari and Mu'aadh in their graves get the reward of everyone there. That is one side we know, but he had another side like every 'Aalim, Mujaddid, Mujaahid and righteous Imaam, and like every pious Muslim should have. Abu Musa strived hard in his Ibaadah during his life. When they saw him in that fashion, they told him why do you not relax a little bit Abu Musa? He said when the horses are about to get at the end of the race or when they see and spot water and they are about to reach the water, they sprint to it. And I am at the end so let me continue until I die, and he did, radhiyallahu 'anhu. Surprising? Well more stunning than that is that they did not say these kind of statements at the retirement age, they used to say such statements in their youth. Many were known to say such statements in their youth. When a person is doing a two mile run, he needs to maintain a form. He takes off at a slow pace, picks up a little bit and then in the final lap and the last yards, he sprints to the finish line. Their life and Ibaadah was not like that. Their life was like the last few yards, like the last lap that you are sprinting to.

Abu Muslim al-Khawlaani yearned so badly to meet the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. A one man nation who single-handedly by the power of Allah took down al-Aswad al-‘Ansi (the man who popped up in Yemen claiming he was a prophet of Allah).

While the armies clashed and the memorisers of the Qur’an were being killed one after another (by the tens and in another narration by the hundreds) as they were fending off Musaylamah al-Kathaab, Abu Muslim al-Khawlaani on the other side of the world took down al-Aswad al-‘Ansi alone by the will of Allah. A man whose Du’aa was answered. He had a statement similar to that of his teacher Abu Musa al-Ash’ari, but he also said something amazing to the Sahaabah. When he was ousted out of Yemen, he quickly headed to Madinah to meet the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, only to find out that the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam had died just before he got there. In his agony of not reaching the level of a Sahaabi, he said do you companions think you will ever beat us? No Wallahi we will compete with you and we will beat you. Daring, bold statement from a giant. That should be my statement and your statement. We should compete with our Salaf, if you want their levels and if you want their companionship in Jannah.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ
الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿آل عمران: ١٤٢﴾

Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought (in His Cause) and (also) tests those who are As-Saabireen (the patient ones, etc)? (Surat Aali Imraan: 142)

Do you think you will enter the same Jannah of Bilaal, Abu Bakr, Khaalid, Umar, Hafsah and Sumayyah without doing the work they did? Do you think just because I took my Shahaadah and I was born into Islam, I am granted a free shuttle pass into Firdaws without some sleepless nights of worship? It is amazing to read in the books that detail the biographies of the Salaf, statements like they said about so and so that if you were to tell him that he would die tomorrow, there is nothing he could fit in his schedule of Ibaadah. Wallahi, numerous times I read it. Every day of their lives was as if they are going to die that day or the following day. You may say we cannot be like them. Wallahil-‘Adheem it is possible. Sahaabah did not get revelation and neither did we. Tabi’een did not see the one who got revelation and neither did we. They were determined, we are not. That is the problem right there. It is difficult yes, impossible? No. We also mention such supreme examples so that if one does a small portion of what we say they did, then he will overcome the obstacle of all obstacles in becoming among those successful, saved from Hell and admitted to Paradise.

فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۖ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ
الْغُرُورِ ﴿آل عمران: ١٨٥﴾

And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing). (Surat Aali Imraan: 185)

Examples that inspire one to not let the blessed days enter and leave without taking advantage of them. And it is not only the quantity of their Ibaadah, but rather it is also the quality of their Ibaadah. Qataadah said Mawriq al-'Ajli said the ideal example of a believer on this earth is a man whose ship has sunk and he is floating on a small piece of wood shouting Yaa Allah, Yaa Allah so that Allah can deliver him out of the water safely. That is how life should be. Their entire lives were like a man in an ocean, his life depends on a small piece of wood, desperate that Allah delivers him to the shore (what they meant by that is Jannah).

They used to describe Sufyaan ath-Thawri as though he was on a sinking ship. Most of his saying was Yaa Rabb Sallim (يا رب سلم), Yaa Rabb Sallim (O Allah safety, O Allah safety), the Du'aa of the Messengers on the Day of Terror. Fatimah Bint Abdul-Maalik, the wife of Umar Ibn Abdul-Azeez the great Khaleefah said I never saw anyone more into Salah or fasting or fearful from Allah than Umar. Fatimah said he used to make Ishaa' then cry and weep, slumbering in and out all night long. She said that when he would be in bed with me, he would remember a verse or a matter of the life after and then he would begin to shake and shiver like a wet bird, sit up and cry all night long as I tried to cover and comfort him. Let me give you more. Fatimah told al-Mugheerah Ibn Hakeem one time that there may be those who prayed and fasted more than Umar Ibn Abdul-Azeez but none of you came close to his fear of Allah. These were men whose Ibaadah nourished and raised them to be the revivers they were.

Uqbah Ibn Naafi' said I went to Fatimah and I asked how was the worship of your husband Umar? They sought to learn from each other so we need to learn from them, and this is our topic. Uqbah went to Fatimah to learn the secrets of Umar Ibn Abdul-Azeez, from the only person who possibly might know. He wanted to know what he did behind those closed doors and behind those walls. Why do you think Uqbah went to her to find out? Because in his two years, four months and some odd days as a Khaleefah, Umar Ibn Abdul-Azeez spread justice and the law of Allah on this earth and he made not only the Muslims rich, rather he made the entire Muslim world rich with the Ahl ath-Thimmah included in that. Listen to her one liner answer. She said I do not know that he showered from Janaabah since he became a Khaleefah. A respectable way of saying in the two years and four months we did not have any relationship. In the day time, it was worship in establishing justice and the rule of Allah on this earth. That is worship, that is the Tawheed of Allah. At night, it was establishing the personal Tawheed of Allah. No time for relationship with his wife for two years, four months and some odd days.

They asked 'Aamir Ibn Abdillah how do you sustain so much Ibaadah? He said simple, all I do is delay my food until night and move my sleep a little bit to the day. Easy? Yes, easy on giant souls only. Another time they asked him and he said when I get tired, I remember Jahannam and it blows the sleep out of my eyes and keeps me up all night. Ahmad Ibn Harb said it astonishes me that one may know Jannah is getting decorated above him and Jahannam is blazing under him and he rests in sleep in between them.

When people saw Mansoor Ibn al-Mu'tamir, they would say this man has been hit with a calamity. His eyes are always teary, his heart is always broken and he is low toned. His mother would tell him what have you done? You cry all night and you never stop weeping, did you kill anyone? He would say mother, I know what I did.

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا... ﴿السجدة:

١٦﴾

Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope. (Surat as-Sajdah: 16)

In the life of Safwaan Ibn Saleem, I read one time that he used to have pain in his feet from standing all night every day. They said this about him. They said he reached the point of Ibaadah where if you tell him the Judgment Day is tomorrow, he could not add anymore Ibaadah to his schedule. He would say all the time:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَحِبُّ لِقَاءَكَ فَأَحِبَّ لِقَائِي

O Allah I love to meet You, so love to meet me.

Yearning for Allah and yearning for meeting Allah was like the gentle breeze constantly blowing on their hearts, extinguishing the blaze of the Dunya on their hearts. Musa Ibn Isma'eel said if I tell you that I never saw Hammaad Ibn Salamah laughing, would you believe me? He was always occupied with teaching, he was an 'Aalim. He was either teaching, reading Qur'an, glorifying Allah (making Dhikr) or going to Salah and that is how his entire day was spent. Hammaad Ibn Salamah said we never saw Sulaymaan at-Taymi but in obedience to Allah. He was either in Salah or leaving from the Masjid, going to a Janaazah or leaving from a Janaazah, teaching or learning. We said this man could not even commit a sin. Is he infallible or are they saying he is infallible? We are not Shi'ah. They said it based on what appeared to them, that the man could not commit a sin even if he wanted to because he did not have time to. His whole life roamed around Ibaadah. Wakee' said al-A'mash was seventy years old and he never missed Takbeer al-Ihraam (Allahu Akbar) behind the Imaam. For sixty years he did not miss the first Rak'ah of Salah.

Repentance and Constantly Returning to Allah - Tawbah and Inaabah

We are all familiar with the term Tawbah (when one repents to Allah), but there is another very similar term called Inaabah (إِنَابَة), a term mentioned in the Qur'an many times. And since it is Ramadhan, we want to move from Tawbah to Inaabah.

Ibn al-Qayyim said it is to hasten pleasing Allah, while continuously and repeatedly returning to Allah (at all times). Meaning, it is Tawbah but continuous Tawbah. Part of Inaabah is to retreat to Allah with your heart, with love, reverence and sincerity in accordance to the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Just as one retreats in the last ten days of Ramadhan for I'tikaaf, leaving everything behind, Inaabah is constant returning in I'tikaaf to Allah. A heart needs to retreat to Allah with honour because if it does not do so with Allah, it retreats with humility to other than Allah. Turning fully to Allah in trials and at ease is Inaabah.

A person who is Muneeb (مُنِيب) is one who repents when he commits a sin but goes further beyond that to change and become in constant contact with Allah, with a relationship with Allah.

Allah said it about Ibraheem 'alayhis-salaam:

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ ﴿٧٥﴾ هود: ٧٥

Verily, Ibraheem was, without doubt, forbearing, used to invoke Allah with humility, and was repentant (to Allah all the time, again and again). (Surat Hud: 75)

Ibraheem was without a doubt forbearing, which is Haleem (حليم). Invoking Allah with humility, that is Awwaah (أَوَّاه). And Muneeb (مُنِيب) is repenting constantly, time and time, again and again, constant repentor to Allah.

A verse considered by some of the 'Ulamaa to be the most hopeful verse in the Qur'an:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
وَأَسْلُمُوا... ﴿٥٤﴾ الزمر ﴿٥٣﴾

Say: O 'Ibaadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith (Islamic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him (in Islam). (Surat az-Zumar: 53-54)

After repentance, Allah mentions:

وَأَنِيبُوا

That is what we are targeting.

Inaabah is three levels. The first level is the root of Inaabah (the principle), which is leaving Shirk to Tawheed, leaving Kufr to Islam. Not having this will make one a Kaafir, because it is leaving Kufr to Islam. That is the first level and it is taken out of the verse:

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَن يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ ۚ فَبَشِّرْ
عِبَادِ ﴿١٧﴾ الزمر ﴿١٧﴾

Those who avoid At-Taaghoot (false deities) by not worshipping them and turn to Allah in repentance, for them are glad tidings; so announce the good news to My slaves. (Surat az-Zumar: 17)

The second level of Inaabah is the Inaabah of al-Muttaqeen (the pious), leaving sins and committed in doing deeds. Whoever does not have this one, he is Muslim and he falls under Islam but we fear Hell over him unless Allah forgives Him (because he has sins). That is taken out of the verse in Surat az-Zumar:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾ الزمر ﴿٥٣﴾

Say: O 'Ibaadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat az-Zumar: 53)

And the following verse after it:

وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ
﴿الزمر: ٥٤﴾

And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith (Islamic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him, (in Islam), before the torment comes upon you, then you will not be helped. (Surat az-Zumar: 54)

The third and final level of Inaabah is the level we are trying to target this Ramadhaan, the Inaabah of the Muhsineen. The peak, complete turning to Allah in your heart and in your body. Constantly returning to Allah again and again, in all times and in all situations, and being in complete submission to Allah. This is the best form of Inaabah. This is the Inaabah of Ibraheem 'alayhis-salaam, this was the level of Ibraheem 'alayhis-salaam:

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ ﴿هود: ٧٥﴾

Verily, Ibraheem was, without doubt, forbearing, used to invoke Allah with humility, and was repentant (to Allah all the time, again and again). (Surat Hud: 75)

And it is also mentioned that Shu'ayb said:

...وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ۖ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿هود: ٨٨﴾

And my success cannot come except from Allah, in Him I trust and unto Him I repent. (Surat Hud: 88)

Ibn Taymiyyah Rahimahullah said the people of this level are the people most tested by the Shaytaan because they are the best, and the Shaytaan wants to get the best off track. Look at the master of humans, the Imaam of all Imaams, the master of the repenters, the master of the worshippers, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He said:

وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً

By Allah, I seek the forgiveness of Allah and repent to Him seventy times every day. Seventy times in Sahih Bukhari and then a hundred times in Sunan an-Nasaa'ee. If the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam whose past, present and future sins are forgiven and he repents and asks Allah for forgiveness between seventy to a hundred times a

day, how many times should we ask when we are not guaranteed forgiveness for one of the hundreds or thousands of sins that we have committed?

Sins harden the hearts, so repent to soften your heart. It is a disease.

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً... ﴿البقرة : ٧٤﴾

Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. (Surat al-Baqarah: 74)

Sins darken the heart so repent, so you can cleanse your heart. There is no better time than these blessed days.

Allah said:

كَلَّا ۚ بَلْ ۚ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿المطففين: ١٤﴾

Nay! But on their hearts is the Raan (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they used to earn. (Surat al-Mutaffifeen: 14)

Dot after dot placed on the heart, it comes to a time when you need to wash it out.

‘Awn Ibn Abdillah said the ones who are constantly repenting to Allah are the ones you should always be with, because they have the softest hearts.

Repentance is a great bargain with Allah. Look at the deal you strike. You make a mistake, you transgress, you repent and you correct your future, all your sins are forgiven and a big baggage more. This Ramadhaan, no one forgot to stock up on food and groceries, and if they did then they go prepare for it before Maghrib. But what about stocking up on Istighfaar, Tawbah, good deeds and repentance?

يا رب إن عظمت ذنوبي كثرة فلقد علمت بأن عفوك أعظم ، إن كان لا يرجوك إلا محسنٌ فبمن يلوذ ويستجير الآثم

O Lord, if the greatness of my sin increases, then I know Your forgiveness is even greater. If only the righteous call You, then who would the sinners like me go to?

أدعوك ربّي كما أمرت تضرعاً فإذا رددت يدي فمن ذا يرحم

I call on You my Lord as you ordered and commanded, with humility, with reverence, and if You turn away my hands then who else is going to accept from me? If You turn away my hands, then who else is going to have mercy on me? If You turn away my hands, then who else is going to forgive me?

مَالِي إِلَيْكَ وَسِيلَةٌ إِلَّا الرَّجَاءُ وَجَمِيلَ عَفْوِكَ ثُمَّ أَنِي مُسْلِمٌ

All I have is hope in You Yaa Allah, that You will forgive me and that I am a Muslim. One of the most popular questions I get on this matter of repentance and Inaabah is, I repent and then I do a sin, then I repent and I do a sin, and I give up and I despair. Allah is talking to you, did you read the Qur'an? Allah is talking to you, calling you:

...يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ... ﴿الزمر: ٥٣﴾

O 'Ibaadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! (Surat az-Zumar: 53)

Allah did not say O you believers and He did not say O mankind, as He said many times in the Qur'an. He did not say Muttaqoon, He did not say the pious and He did not say the Muhsineen. He did not say the forerunners, the Saabiqun Bil-Khayraat (سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ). He called on the sinners not to despair.

'Aasim Ibn Rajaa' said Umar Ibn Abdul-Azeez gave a speech one time and he said O people, if you fall in a sin then repent, and if you do it again then repent again, and if you do it again then repent again because the sins enclose on the necks and they are a destruction. And the peak of destruction, the destruction of all destructions is remaining on sins and persisting on them without repenting.

An authentic Hadith al-Qudsi in Sunan at-Tirmidhi. O son of Adam, as long as you call on Me, I shall forgive you of what you have done and think nothing of it. O son of Adam, even if your sins were to reach the clouds in the sky and then you were to come and ask for My forgiveness, I would forgive you and think nothing of it. O son of Adam, if you were to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and you were to meet Me after death not making any Shirk, I would bring you forgiveness as great as the earth and think nothing of it. You are dealing with the Ghafoor, you are dealing with Ar-Raheem, you are dealing with the 'Afuw. That is what you get out of the qualities of Allah which you know about.

Ibraheem Ibn Shaybaan said there was a twenty year old youth that he knew. The Shaytaan instigated to him that you are young, why would you repent right now and leave the pleasures of this life? You have a long life ahead of you. So he went back to his sins and his old ways. In the midst of the sins, he had a flashback to his old days with Allah. A believer is still a believer even during sinning, he still has Laa Ilaaha Illallah in his heart. So he yearned and longed and began to cry and weep for those days. He said

will Allah ever accept from me? Then he heard a voice (it was possibly him talking to himself) saying:

عَبَدْتَنَا فَشَكَرْنَاكَ ، وَعَصَيْتَنَا فَأَمَّهَلْنَاكَ ، وَلَئِنْ رَجَعْتَ إِلَيْنَا قَبْلُنَاكَ

You worshipped Us and We thanked you, you sinned and We gave you respite, you come back and We will accept from you.

If you repented and got fooled by the Shaytaan, then return, do not be ashamed and do not despair. When you continuously repent, it is like a wrestling match with the Shaytaan. Every time you repent, you have pinned the Shaytaan down and won, you are the champ. Once you despair and stop repenting, the Shaytaan became the champ and you do not want that. Do not be a surrenderist and accept continuing sinning and being on the wrong path. Resist and struggle the sins. Maybe one of your shouts to Allah in repentance will be so sincere that He will write you among those swayed from being in Jahannam, and take you into Jannah.

How can you despair in Allah with all these Ayaat and Ahaadith, when He is asking you. Why is He asking you to repent when Allah does not need me nor you? He is Independent and Sovereign. That is Ar-Raheem, that is Al-Ghafoor, that is Al-'Afuw. Wallahil-'Adheem, you are dealing with One more merciful than your mother.

Repentance

Wallahil-'Adheem you are dealing with One more merciful than your mother. In Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim, the Sahaabah were sitting after a battle and they saw a woman from those who were captured. She was running after every child looking for her son. She would take every child, hug him, nourish him and then pass on and go to the next child. A very moving scene that moved the Sahaabah and the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam decided to make a lesson out of it for the Sahaabah. He asked them, do you think that mother would ever throw her son in Hell? They said no, never. He said Allah is more merciful with His servants than that mother is with her child.

Several days ago I was reading Surat an-Nisaa' and a meaning popped up in my mind that I had never thought of before. In the Qur'an, Allah commands the parents to take care of their children when He talks about inheritance.

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ... ﴿النساء: ١١﴾

Allah instructs you concerning your children. (Surat an-Nisaa': 11)

Many people think the most merciful to them is their parent, yet in this verse Allah is telling who you think is most merciful (your mum and your dad) to take care of their children. Allah is telling the ones you think are the most merciful to take care of you. You see that mercy? It was the Du'aa of some of the righteous, O Allah my mother is the most merciful to me and she would never ever let me be in torment and she would take me out of it, O Allah You are more merciful to me than my mother so protect me from the torment Yaa Arham Ar-Raahimeen (يا الرحم الرحمين).

With me (a human), you make a mistake or even before you make a mistake, before one shot and two shots or three strikes, I abandon you. But dealing with the Ghafoor, Ar-Raheem and Al-'Afuw, you are dealing with different measures.

...وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَى... ﴿النحل: ٦٠﴾

And for Allah is the highest description. (Surat an-Nahl: 60)

Never despair. In the authentic Hadith in Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, the man who killed ninety nine people (one of the biggest sins after Shirk). He went to an ignorant worshipper and he asked him can he repent. The worshipper said ninety nine? No way. So he finished them off, and that in itself is actually a lesson. If the doors of repentance were closed, it would cause chaos on this earth because what have you got to lose? Just go ahead and be full blown evil, you have nothing to lose. Then he asked an 'Aalim (a knowledgeable person). He told him I have killed a hundred people,

can I repent? He said nothing can stop you from repenting, get out of this evil land. Allah not only forgave him, but changed the universe for him. On his way to the new town, He shortened the universe for him, in honour for him (when the angels who take the good soul quarreled with the angels who take the evil soul). Allah changed the universe for a killer who killed one hundred innocent souls and repented. Imagine what He will do for me and you.

When you feel despair and you are going to despair in Allah, remember the story everyone knew as a kid, of the People of the Trench (Ashaab al-Ukhlood (أصحاب (الأخدود)). It was a massacre and a genocide, they annihilated people of Laa Ilaaha Illallah. They killed the righteous young boy who stood up to them. Massacre and genocide. What does Allah say?

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿البروج: ١٠﴾

Verily, those who put into trial the believing men and believing women (by torturing them and burning them), and then do not turn in repentance, (to Allah), will have the torment of Hell, and they will have the punishment of the burning Fire. (Surat al-Burooj: 10)

Those who put the believing men and women into trial and did not turn in repentance. Look at that, and did not turn in repentance. Do you know what it means? Had they repented from their crimes, Allah would have forgiven them because He said:

ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا

And they did not repent.

There is no sin too big and there is no sin too small. Repent and Allah forgives all. Ramadhaan is the season for it, start right now. Number one, regret the past. Promise not to do it again and say Astaghfirullah. If it deals with the rights of other people, try to give it back to them directly, if not indirectly. If it will stir up Fitnah then make Du'aa for them, give charity in their name or mention them in good. Simple, you do that sincerely and Wallahi the Ghafoor, Ar-Raheem is going to accept.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿الشورى: ٢٥﴾

And He it is Who accepts repentance from His slaves, and forgives sins, and He knows what you do. (Surat ash-Shoora: 25)

He promised.

...وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا ﴿النساء: ١٢٢﴾

And whose words can be truer than those of Allah? (Surat an-Nisaa': 122)

Not only will He accept, He will change them into deeds.

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿الفرقان: ٧٠﴾

Except those who repent and believe (in Islamic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Furqaan: 70)

Not only that, He will love you.

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ... ﴿البقرة: ٢٢٢﴾

Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance. (Surat al-Baqarah: 222)

Get up my brother and sister and shake the dust of sins off your back. Spice up and decorate your Tawbah more by making Wudhu and two Rak'ah. Declare your Tawbah to Him, cry in agony over your sins and start the path to Allah. Repentance is a shadow that should never ever depart you. Repentance is condolence to those who are righteous. Ramadhaan is the prosperous season for all that. Do not get arrogant by any knowledge you have or any deeds that you ever did. No matter how much you have of it, Wallahi we are all in the boat of sinning together. We are all in the same boat.

In Sahih al-Bukhari, look at this beautiful, amazing Hadith. A servant committed a sin and said O Allah forgive my sin. So Allah said My servant committed a sin and he has known that he has a Lord that forgives his sin and punishes for his sin, I forgive him. Then he sinned again. Allah knows us, Allah knows His servants.

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ... ﴿المالك: ١٤﴾

Should not He Who has created know? (Surat al-Mulk: 14)

He knows we are going to do it again and again, we are going to sin more and more. He knows who He created and their nature because He created us.

He sinned again and the sinner said O Allah forgive my sin. Allah said My servant has committed a sin, he knows that he has a Lord who forgives his sin and punishes for his sin. Then he said again a third time, O Lord I sinned forgive my sin. Look at that, three times. Allah says My servant has committed a sin and he knows that he has a Lord that forgives his sin and punishes for his sin, do what you wish I have forgiven you. I did not make a mistake here, Allah tells him do what you wish for I have forgiven you. Did you hear that? Not meaning you get a free ticket to Jannah. It means you are forgiven as long as you sincerely repented (as in the earlier part of the Hadith) and you continue to repent.

Wallahi there is so much hope in these Hadith that sometimes we have to warn that there is too much hope here, do not get carried away with hope because that is a danger zone as well. Never ever ever repent while you are planning the next sin. That is fake and that is fraud with Allah.

Make Allah happy. Yes I said it right, make Allah happy. In Sahih al-Bukhari, Allah is happier with one who repents more than a man whose on a journey in a desert, he loses his food, water, transportation and camel so he sits there by the tree and awaits death. Suddenly he looks up and the camel is before his eyes with his water, food and everything he needed. From awaiting death to sudden relief. Out of excitement he says O Allah you are my slave and I am your Lord. Allah gives a scenario of how happy one is when life comes back to him and Allah is happier than that when one repents. Make Allah happy my brother and my sister by not sleeping until you spill your heart out to Allah. Not just today but every day, today will be the start. Do it today so if you die you will meet Allah on a clean state.

Does one not have shame that Allah descends to the heaven closest to the earth every single night in the one third end of the night (in a manner that best suits Allah, we do not know how).

...لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿الشُّورَى: ١١﴾

There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All Hearer, the All Seer. (Surat ash-Shoora: 11)

He descends and asks at a time when nearly everyone is between sins and sleep. They are either watching that which Allah prohibited, drinking in places that Allah prohibited or they are in deep sleep. That is the majority of the world. Be among the few of the few who are crying, begging and pleading to Allah.

In conclusion, I said a few days ago that anyone who does a deed will see its affect in this life and in the Aakhirah. You get the bonus (this life), but the main goal is the Aakhirah. From the verse:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿النحل: ٩٧﴾

Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter). (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

The opposite is true today. Pertaining to our talk today, Ibn Abi Mulaykah said when Asmaa' radhiallahu 'anha used to have a headache, she would grab her head and say this is from a sin that I have committed and Allah forgave a lot.

The Qur'an is clear and decisive on it.

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَن كَثِيرٍ ﴿الشورى: ٣٠﴾

And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much. (Surat ash-Shoora: 30)

He Responds to the Invocations!

If you look in the Qur'an in Surat al-Baqarah, you are going to find that there is a series of verses on Ramadhaan.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٨٣﴾

O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious). (Surat al-Baqarah: 183)

The second verse is:

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٤﴾

[Observing Sawm (fasts)] for a fixed number of days. (Surat al-Baqarah: 184)

The third verse is:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhaan in which was revealed the Qur'an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

Three verses after each other on matters directly pertaining to fasting. Suddenly you get to the fourth verse and it is out of topic. It is about Du'aa.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٦﴾

And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). (Surat al-Baqarah: 186)

Then you go the fifth verse and it goes back to the rules and regulations of fasting:

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٧﴾

It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of As-Sawm (the fasts). (Surat al-Baqarah: 187)

Why was there a verse on Du'aa in between a series of verses directly speaking about fasting? Why would Allah put a verse here that is off topic? Is it off topic? Impossible. Every aspect of the Qur'an is perfected. There is a break in the verses of the Qur'an pertaining to the topic of fasting to draw your attention to the importance of Du'aa and that Ramadhaan is the month of Du'aa.

There are times that Du'aa is more likely to be answered and Ramadhaan is one of the best seasons for that. Look deeper into that verse:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٦﴾

And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). (Surat al-Baqarah: 186)

Fourteen times in the Qur'an you are going to find and they ask you and if they ask you, Yas'aloona (يَسْأَلُونَكَ) and Wa Ithaa Sa'alaka (وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ) (thirteen Yas'aloona and one Wa Ithaa Sa'alaka). Every one of the times when Allah says and they ask you, you are going to find Qul (قُلْ) (and tell them), except one time in the Qur'an which is about Du'aa. It is consistent in every one of them, except in Du'aa. If they ask you, and there is no Qul (and tell them). It is trying to convey pure Tawheed to you, that this is a relationship between you and Allah directly. No Messenger, no Wali and not even the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam is between you and Allah. The Du'aa is directly between you and Allah. It is complete Tawheed, pure Tawheed, and that is why there is no Qul in it.

THE SPECIAL TIMES FOR DU'AA

The Du'aa is answered at all times and in all situations. Allah answers at all times (days, nights or evenings) and in all situations (standing, sitting or laying in bed). In Wudhu or out of Wudhu, it does not matter. But there are times and situations where Du'aa is more likely to be answered. Let us take some of those tips so we

can perfect our Du'aa in this month of Du'aa. And not only that, but we are never going to stop making Du'aa after it Inshaa Allah Ta'aala.

Pursue the special times. For example, the Days of 'Arafaat, the month of Ramadhaan, the one third end of the night, when it rains, after Iqaamah, between Athaan and Iqaamah and the Du'aa of a fasting person. At the one third end of the night, Allah descends to the heaven closest to the earth and asks is there is anyone who needs anything? Is there anyone who needs to be forgiven so I can forgive him? The more you combine of these special times and situations, the more likeliness that the Du'aa will be accepted Inshaa Allah. For example, combining Ramadhaan with the night of Laylat al-Qadar, Sujood (prostration) and the one third end of the night. Look how amazing that is, special times and special situations.

BE FORMAL IN YOUR DU'AA

You can make Du'aa at any time and in any situation, but be formal sometimes. For example, sometimes go make Wudhu and plan it. It is like a date, plan it. Go make Wudhu, pray two Rak'ah, face the Qiblah, be formal and raise your hands. In Sahih Muslim, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam raised his hands once until his armpits were showing (the whiteness of his armpits was showing). Sometimes he raised them close to his chest and sometimes he made Du'aa with his finger, and it is proper to make Du'aa with your finger.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَيٌّ كَرِيمٌ ، يَسْتَحِي مِنْ عَبْدِهِ إِذَا رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ أَنْ يَرُدَّهُمَا صِفْرًا

Allah the Ever Living, the Most Generous, if a man raises his hands in supplication, He will be ashamed to return his hands disappointed or empty. He will never turn your hands away with zero and He is ashamed to do that.

Abu Dardaa' used to say raise your hands to Allah before they are fettered in chains.

MAKE DU'AA IN A VOICE NOT TOO LOUD AND NOT TOO LOW

When the Sahaabah raised their voices out loud, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ، إِنَّ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَ لَيْسَ بِأَصَمٍّ وَلَا غَائِبًا

In Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim. He said you are not calling someone who is deaf or absent.

And likewise in the Qur'an:

...وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافُ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١١٠﴾ الإسراء:

And offer your Salat (prayer) neither aloud nor in a low voice, but follow a way between. (Surat al-Israa': 110)

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً... ﴿٥٥﴾ الأعراف:

Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. (Surat al-A'raaf: 55)
Verses that mean neither loud nor low, but follow a way in between. And that is one of the manners of Du'aa.

Allah praised Zakariyyah for keeping his voice in between:

إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا ﴿٣﴾ مريم:

When he called out his Lord (Allah) a call in secret. (Surat Maryam: 3)

DO NOT TRY TO MAKE YOUR DU'AA RHYTHMIC

Do not try overly to make Du'aa rhythmic like a poem. If it happens normally then okay, but to go out of your way and do that is wrong. That does not happen a lot in English, it happens a lot in Arabic. It is called Saja' (سجع), where they try so hard and go overboard in trying to make their Du'aa rhythmic.

Allah said in the Qur'an:

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ الأعراف:

Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. He likes not the aggressors. (Surat al-A'raaf: 55)

When He talks about Du'aa, at the end He says He does not like those who transgress in Du'aa. Some of the 'Ulamaa consider this transgression, like saying Rahmaan, Qur'an, Insaan, Bayaan and going out of your way in doing that. Now even though it is not an issue in English, I mention it because there is a lesson to it.

The reason it is disliked by the Salaf (including a direct statement by Ibn Abbaas in Sahih al-Bukhari where he tells his servant not to do that) is because it takes out the humility in Du'aa. You need to communicate your Du'aa to Allah sincerely and in humility, in a way you feel best comes out of your heart. That is the point of Du'aa. It is not about being eloquent, that is not how it works with Allah. In this world, you have to be eloquent to get some positions. With Allah, focus on humility, sincerity and getting your heart into your Du'aa.

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا... ﴿الأنبياء: ٩٠﴾

Verily, they used to hasten on to do good deeds, and they used to call on Us with hope and fear. (Surat al-Anbiyaa': 90)

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً... ﴿الأعراف: ٥٥﴾

Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. (Surat al-A'raaf: 55)

BE FIRM IN YOUR DU'AA

Be firm in your Du'aa, knowing Allah will answer you. In Sunan at-Tirmidhi:

ادْعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَنْتُمْ مُوقِنُونَ بِالْإِجَابَةِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ دُعَاءَ مَنْ قَلْبٍ غَافِلٍ

Call on Allah being certain that your prayer will be answered, but know at the same time that Allah will not answer the prayer of a heart which is negligent.

When you make Du'aa, be firm and have your heart in it. Be firm that Allah is going to answer you. Do not say O Allah forgive me if You will. Do not say that, say O Allah forgive me period. Be firm and know that Allah is going to forgive you. Do not feel hesitant that Allah will not answer you. If Allah answered the

Shaytaan, do you think He will not answer me and you? The Shaytaan asked Allah to allow him respite until the Day they get resurrected:

﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ أَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾
﴿الأعراف﴾

(Iblees) said: "Allow me respite till the Day they are raised up (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)." (Allah) said: "You are of those allowed respite." (Surat al-A'raaf: 14-15)

Me and you are not worse than the Shaytaan. No matter what we did, we are not worse than the Shaytaan, even though we have mountains and mountains of sins. If Allah did not reject the Du'aa of the Shaytaan, will He reject my Du'aa and your Du'aa?

Even the non believers (Mushrikeen) asked Allah sincerely at one point and Allah answered them.

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِكِ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿العنكبوت: ٦٥﴾

And when they embark on a ship, they invoke Allah, making their Faith pure for Him only, but when He brings them safely to land, behold, they give a share of their worship to others. (Surat al-Ankaboot: 65)

When they were in the oceans and the currents and wind was about to drown them, they turned to Allah alone. They left Shirk and turned to Allah alone for moments. Those were people who associated partners to Allah and people who Allah knew are going to go back to associating partners to Him as soon as He takes them to the shore. Yet for moments when they sincerely invoked Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala, He responded to their Du'aa. If He responded to the Du'aa of the Mushrikeen who for a short period of time did Du'aa sincerely, do you think He will not answer the Du'aa of the Muwahhhideen?

BE PERSISTENT IN YOUR DU'AA

Be persistent in your Du'aa, and this is an A and B. When we say be persistent, it is A. First of all, make your Du'aa in persistence. When you ask Allah, ask Him over and over again, pleading and begging.

In Sahih Muslim, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam used to make Du'aa three times. Ibn Masood said he used to make it three, three, three, ask Allah three times. That is in making Du'aa, then be persistent over time. If you do not get it overnight, do not give up, make Du'aa more and more and do not ever say I

am making so much Du'aa and Allah is not answering me. You negate your Du'aa like that.

يُسْتَجَابُ لِأَحَدِكُمْ مَا لَمْ يَعْجَلْ فَيَقُولُ : قَدْ دَعَوْتُ فَلَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لِي
، فَإِذَا دَعَوْتُ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا فَإِنَّكَ تَدْعُو كَرِيمًا

In Bukhari and Muslim. The Du'aa of any one of you will be answered so long as he is not impatient and says I made Du'aa but it was not answered. There were some of the Salaf who did not get what they wanted in twenty years and they said we still have hope that Allah is going to answer us.

MAKE SALAH ON THE PROPHET SALLALLAHU 'ALAYHI WA SALLAM AT THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END OF YOUR DU'AA

Start and end your Du'aa with Salah on the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and find a spot in between to make Salah on the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Abu Sulaymaan ad-Daraani said a beautiful statement. He said start your Du'aa with Salah on the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and end it with Salah on the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Why? Look at how amazing his statement was. He said because the Salah on the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam is automatically accepted, and the Most Generous Allah is not going to accept the beginning and the end and leave out the middle.

Always make Salah on the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam in the beginning, middle and end of your Du'aa. In Sahih at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Katheer said its chain is authentic, Umar Ibn al-Khattab radhiyallahu 'anhu said Du'aa is suspended between the heaven and the earth, none of it is taken up until you send your blessing on the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. This may be a personal statement by Umar Ibn al-Khattab because Umar said it and he did not say that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said it. However, the rule on such personal statements is that they are considered attributable to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam because these are matters of Deen. There is no way Umar came up with this on his own. It is a rule on this matter and similar Ahaadith like this.

Al-Bayhaqi narrated a similar statement by Ali in Shu'ab Al-Imaan (شعب الإيمان).

He said Ali radhiyallahu 'anhu himself said every Du'aa is not responded to until one sends his blessing on the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

This Hadith is also narrated by Baqee' Ibn Makhlad from Ali as Marfoo' (مرفوع)

(meaning that Ali said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said it). So it is attributed to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam by Baqee' Ibn Makhlad. Do you know who Baqee' Ibn Makhlad is? Baqee' Ibn Makhlad is the one I gave a talk on, the man whose Du'aa got accepted for a prisoner who was taken. When he

made Du'aa, the shackles kept breaking and breaking until they finally released him and they said someone has been making Du'aa for you.

WORK ON YOUR INTERNAL MATTERS

The final matter is work on your internal matters and that is very long. This whole topic is very long but this is a super short summary. For example, repent to Allah before you make Du'aa. Return the rights of others, turn whole heartedly to Allah, give charity and rest assured Allah will not let you down. He said ask and I will give you, and He will.

Ibn al-Mubaarak said I went to Madinah one time when there was a drought and people went out to make Istisqaa' for a very long time. He said one day I went to the Masjid and I sat next to a black man who was wearing Khash (rough clothes made out of camel hair or goat hair). People were gone for a long time, Allah did not answer and I happened to sit next to this black man in the Masjid. His clothes were wrapped around his waist and one on his shoulders. I heard him say Yaa Allah you blocked the rain on the people to teach the sinners a lesson. Yaa Haleem Yaa Allah, Yaa Haleem Yaa Allah, Yaa Haleem Yaa Allah, the One whose servants see nothing but good from Him, grant them rain. Give them rain now, give them rain now, now, now, he kept saying now (as-Saa'ah, as-Saa'ah (الساعة)). Ibn al-Mubaarak said he kept saying as-Saa'ah as-Saa'ah until clouds came from every direction and it began to thunder and rain all over. The giants of the 'Ulamaa had been going for some time making Istisqaa'. The rich, the poor, the leaders and the laymen, yet this neglected black man wearing the poorest of poorest clothes that they wore at that time raises his hands in Du'aa and Allah answers him.

My brother and sister, as members of the Islamic Ummah, you are held accountable for your shortcomings to your wronged Muslims (the ones who are oppressed). Make Du'aa for you, for your family and for your loved ones, but also include the oppressed and wronged Muslims in your Du'aa every day, so at least when you stand before Allah you can say Yaa Allah I made Du'aa. Ibn al-Mubaarak went to visit al-Fudhayl Ibn 'Iyyaadh after this incident. They were both giants and both were Imaams. Al-Fudhayl looked at the face of Ibn al-Mubaarak and he said what is wrong Ibn al-Mubaarak? He said there are other matters that people beat us in. He told him the story and they were agonised at how people worshipped Allah in secrecy and that they beat them (they got their Du'aa answered). When he told al-Fudhayl Ibn 'Iyyaadh, al-Fudhayl Ibn 'Iyyaadh shouted and fell unconscious.

A brother showed me a clip a few days ago of a group of Muslims in a cell and a judge with his chest up high and arrogant issues the order on those Muslims, that they be executed. They walked out and he walked out, they went to prison and he left. The days went on and the clip actually shows one of them talking, he said we made Du'aa to Allah sincerely that He grant us release from prison with

honour, and we were persistent on it. You know when you are secluded and alone in solitary and you are tormented and tortured, the Du'aa comes from the deep down bottom of your heart. He said we thought someone was going to come one day and dig us out of the prison, the prison is going to bust open and break or an earthquake is going to happen. We did not know how it was going to happen but we knew Allah was going to answer our Du'aa. Suddenly one day someone comes with a key, opens the door and says you are free to go home. The world has changed, the leader of the country for a decade is gone and you are free to go home.

In this month, activate your Ibaadah of Du'aa. When you make Du'aa, other than all the benefits you are going to get, you get reward for merely asking Allah. You know how you get reward for reading Qur'an and you get reward for Dhikr? You get reward just for Du'aa. Yes Allah will answer your Du'aa but you get a bonus on top of that, you get reward for merely making Du'aa because it is an Ibaadah.

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ

So ask Allah, supplicate and turn to the One whose door is never closed.

The Arrows of the Night Never Miss

Yesterday we were talking about the importance of Du'aa in Ramadhaan and how in the middle of the chain of verses talking about Ramadhaan, there is a verse about Du'aa.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٨٦﴾

And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright. (Surat al-Baqarah: 186)

This is to draw your attention to the importance of Du'aa in Ramadhaan. How mighty and beautiful Du'aa the truthful and sincere Du'aa is. Umar Ibn al-Khattab radhiallahu 'anhu used to say I do not worry about my Du'aa getting accepted, I worry more about making the Du'aa. One who makes a Du'aa leaves it to Allah and Allah will answer it.

Can you believe that the Qur'an starts in Du'aa and ends in Du'aa? It starts in al-Faatihah and in al-Faatihah is one of the most amazing, most beautiful and most collective Du'aa.

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿الفاتحة: ٦﴾

Guide us to the Straight Way. (Surat al-Faatihah: 6)

And at the end of the Qur'an in Surat An-Naas:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ﴿١﴾ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾ مِنْ
شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾ ﴿الناس﴾

Say: "I seek refuge with (Allah) the Lord of mankind, The King of mankind, The Ilaah (God) of mankind, from the evil of the whisperer (devil who whispers evil in the hearts of men) who withdraws (from his whispering in one's heart after one remembers Allah)." (Surat an-Naas: 1-4)

So the Qur'an starts with Du'aa to guide us (you ask Allah to guide us) and it ends in seeking refuge from the bandits and the thugs who get between you and Allah in worship. It starts in Du'aa and it ends in Du'aa, and in the middle of the verses about Ramadhaan is the verse:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
 ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٨٦﴾

And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright. (Surat al-Baqarah: 186)

Al-Awzaa'ee Rahimahullah said people went to seek rain one time (Salat al-Istisqaa') and the man giving the speech was Bilal Ibn Sa'd. He got up, praised and glorified Allah and said O people who gathered here, do you not confess your sins? They all shouted yes. He said O Allah you heard what they said.

...مَا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ... ﴿التوبة: ٩١﴾

No ground (of complaint) can there be against the Muhsinoon (good doers). (Surat at-Tawbah: 91)

We admit our faults O Allah, will Your forgiveness be for other than us who admit their faults? Forgive us and have mercy on us, forgive us and have mercy on us, forgive us and have mercy on us. He raised his hands, kept pleading with Allah and he did not put his hands down until the rain began to fall.

The One who opened the sky with abundant rain can bring you the husband you wish for if you make Du'aa, because the verse we are talking about says:

إِذَا دَعَانِ

He can bring you the wife you dream about, if you make Du'aa. He can bring you the peace missing out of your life, if you make Du'aa. The tranquility in your marriage is missing, now turn to Allah. Does Allah not control the heart of your husband more than he controls it? He controls the heart of your wife more than she controls it.

...وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ... ﴿الأنفال: ٢٤﴾

And know that Allah comes in between a person and his heart (i.e. He prevents an evil person to decide anything). (Surat al-Anfaal: 24)

The person asking can be anyone, do not say I have too many sins. Yes you need to work on them, but also ask.

Ataa' as-Sulami said we were deprived of rain one time and on the order of the leader, we headed to make Salat al-Istisqaa'. We passed by a man standing in the alley, the man recognised Ataa' and he said Ataa' is this the day of Nushoor (the Resurrection Day)? Is this the day:

...إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿العاديات: ٩﴾

When the contents of the graves are brought out and poured forth (all mankind is resurrected). (Surat al-'Aaadiyaat: 9)

He saw such a massive crowd heading to supplicate and he had never seen anything like it before. Ataa' said no, we are just heading out to ask Allah for rain. The man said with earthly hearts or heavenly hearts? Ataa' said Inshaa Allah with heavenly hearts. The man raised his hands to Allah before anyone got to the Masjid. He said:

إلهي وسيدي ومولاي ، لا تهلك بلادك بذنوب عبادك ، ولكن بالسر
المكنون من أسمائك إلا ما سقيتنا ماء غدقاً فراتاً تحيي به العباد
وتروي به البلاد ، يا من هو على كل شيء قدير ، يا من هو على
كل شيء قدير

Ataa' said before they reached their destiny, it began to thunder, storm and rain. From the question he was asking Ataa', you would say maybe he is a little bit mentally off, but not to Allah. Whatever is in your heart, say it and spill it in this season.

A man accused Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas of embezzling or fraud, he said he is a coward who does not go in the battles (he sends people to the battles and does not go) and thirdly he said he is an unjust man. Even though Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas was a giant Sahaabi, Umar Ibn al-Khattaab took these accusations seriously so he investigated it. Sa'd said:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ عَبْدُكَ هَذَا كَاذِبًا قَامَ رِيَاءً وَسُمْعَةً ، فَأَطْلُ عُمُرَهُ وَأَطْلُ
فَقْرَهُ وَعَرِّضْهُ بِالْفِتَنِ

He said O Allah, if this man who accused me is a liar and he did this to show off, then give him a long life full of poverty and subject him to Fitan. A narrator in the chain of the Hadith (Abdul-Maalik Ibn Umayr) said when I saw him later on as an old man, I saw him in the alleys trying to lure women and do Haraam with them. He said when I asked him, he said:

شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ مَفْتُونٌ أَصَابَتْنِي دَعْوَةُ سَعْدٍ

I am an old Shaykh astray because of a Da'wah I have been hit with from Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas radhiallahu 'anhu.

The people of Baghdad went to al-Mu'tasim. He had young Turkish soldiers that he paid to tag on his army and they filled Baghdad. They were very harsh and oppressive to the locals (the people of Baghdad), so they got fed up one day and they sent a representative (an 'Aalim, an Imaam, a Shaykh) to speak to al-Mu'tasim. When he went to al-Mu'tasim, he said curb your soldiers away from us or we are going to fight you. Mu'tasim possibly laughed, he said you want to fight me when I have eighty thousand armed men? The man said yes we are going to fight you, we are going to fight you with arrows of the night (Du'aa to Allah). We do not have any other means, that is all we have and we are going to use those. Even though he was an oppressive tyrant, al-Mu'tasim said I cannot face that and he went from Baghdad to what today is Saamarraa'. He was one of the people who oppressed Ahmad Ibn Hanbal but no matter how strong his technology was or how big his military was, he knew that when they threatened him with Allah, there are no missiles that can intercept the arrows of the night time. It is a powerful weapon and the sharpest sword.

How many of those arrows of the night time took clouds of oppression away, destroyed tyrants and fended off oppressors. It is time to sharpen your arrows and it is time to put the arrows in the arrow rest. It is time to pull the cable of Yaa Allah, the arrows of the night time never miss.

When al-Hajjaaj killed Sa'eed Ibn al-Musayyib, the word got to al-Hasan al-Basri (his colleague and friend). Al-Hasan al-Basri raised his hands and he said:

اللَّهُمَّ يَا قَاصِمَ الْجَبَابِرَةِ اقْصِمِ الْحَجَّاجَ

Hajjaaj did not live to see another day.

اتَّقُوا دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِ وَإِنْ كَانَ كَافِرًا ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ دُونَهَا حِجَابٌ

The Hadith in Sahih al-Jaami' on the authority of Anas Ibn Maalik. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam fear the supplication of the oppressed even if he is a

Kaafir, there is no barrier between it (the Du'aa) and Allah. That is even if he is a Kaafir, so imagine if he is a Muwahhid whose forehead bows to Allah.

During the Abbaasiyyah Khilaafah (196 AH), in Africa there was a leader named Abdullah Ibn Aghlab. He was an oppressive tyrant leader and he was arrogant and bad mannered. Back then, the big Imaam or Shaykh in Africa was Hafs Ibn Humayd. He went to the leader and he said fear Allah in your youth, have mercy on your looks and your body so it will never be touched by Hellfire (because he was known to look good and have strength), stop these excessive taxes you imposed on us and govern by the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The leader turned away more arrogant than before and in retaliation he increased the taxes. Hafs Ibn Humayd (the Shaykh) returned to the people and he said I despair from the leader, but I do not despair from Allah. Tonight from Isha' until Fajr, everyone is going to make Du'aa. Release your tongues in Du'aa from Isha' until Fajr. People gathered in their Masjid and in their houses. People were seen making Wudhu and preparing from Isha' until Fajr, saying O Allah stop his oppression, O Allah take his days away. Suddenly he gets a tumor or a scratch under his ear that caused him not to survive for another five days. During those five days. they themselves were a lesson. His colour changed, he was black and it changed as was described to a rotten white. He was described as very handsome and strong and Allah took that away before He took his soul.

When the two armies of Taloot and Jaloot were about to clash, where did they turn?

... رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

﴿البقرة: ٢٥٠﴾

"Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience and make us victorious over the disbelieving people." (Surat al-Baqarah: 250)

What is the result?

فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ... ﴿البقرة: ٢٥١﴾

So they routed them by Allah's Leave. (Surat al-Baqarah: 251)

Salah ad-Deen died 589 AH and the Muslim world divided after him. His sons took a portion and his brothers took a portion, everyone wanted to be a leader. The portion of Egypt went to the son of Salah ad-Deen (al-Azeez Ibn Uthman) and this man had friends from the Jahmiyyah (the ones who deny the names and qualities of Allah and also have deviance in the belief in Qadar) or they got close to him. The Jahmiyyah played with the mind of this leader to oust a group of

righteous 'Ulamaa from the Hanaabilah who followed the Sunnah. They were on the right path of the Sunnah and the masses were turning to them, whereas they wanted the masses to turn to those Jahmiyyah. The 'Ulamaa got word that they are being ousted and they have to vacate. They turned and made Du'aa, they had no other means. This was in the nineteenth day of Muharram in 595 AH.

The son of Salah ad-Deen went on his way enjoying his routine hunting and the oppressors got happy (that is how they usually are). They sleep in joy thinking it is all over, while masses or one person makes Du'aa because of their sleepless nights. While he was on his horse hunting and enjoying life thinking it is over with, a wolf chased his horse and scared his horse. The horse jerked him off of it and he fell off into the mouth of the wolf. The wolf chewed him up. When the word spread of what happened, those Hanaabilah (the people of Ahlus-Sunnah) gained respect by the people in all of ash-Shaam and Egypt.

...وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ﴿الأنفال: ٣٠﴾

They were plotting and Allah too was planning, and Allah is the Best of the planners. (Surat al-Anfaal: 30)

A Finger Worth More Than A Thousand Soldiers

Al-Haafidh Abdul-Ghani al-Maqdisi was an Imaam of Hadith and he was known to the laymen and the 'Ulamaa. He related to everyone and everyone liked him. A man who had a soft heart and eyes that were always crying from the fear of Allah, and a man who spoke the truth. People like this 'Aalim get envied because there are governments that pour and pump millions to promote certain characters so those characters can promote their agenda with unlimited resources that they have, yet you find a true 'Aalim who may not even have the provision of one day gain the love and attention of masses. Sometimes it may not be masses, but they are more effective than the masses their opponents have.

One day and precisely on the twenty fourth day of Dhul-Hijjah 594 AH in a Halaqah in Damascus he was teaching, two men approached him to harm him. He was teaching a class of 'Aqeedah. Al-Khateeb Dhiyaa' ad-Deen and al-Qaadhi Ibn az-Zukki went and informed the leader that this man is deviant, so the leader invited them and let them have a debate and our scholar here won the debate. That angered those two Ash'aris more so they went to the ruler again and kept instigating and instigating until the leader got fed up and he said Abdul-Ghani al-Maqdisi leave my country. He left and on his way leaving he made Du'aa on those two Ash'aris. Al-Qaadhi Ibn az-Zukki was a judge and within days he went from being a judge to being an insane man who would have crazy outbursts in the streets and died days after (and so did his partner).

Wallahi many stories one can go on, but let me tell you this personal one that comes to my mind a lot. When I was a teenager, my father was giving a Khutab in a local Masjid here and a Masjid he helped found when he was a youth (when he first came to this country). In the 1980s, Khomeini was so popular and he was like the Messiah that was going to liberate the Muslim world, return Falasteen and do everything. It was rare to enter a house of people from the Sunnah who did not have his picture, may Allah curse his soul. At that time my father invited a Shaykh named Ihsaan Ilaahi Dhaheer from Pakistan. He was a reviver in exposing Shi'ah and he was possibly killed by them soon after that (approximately a year after he visited us). After Ihsaan Ilaahi Dhaheer left to Pakistan, he was attacked by the Shi'ah because they are a majority in the area. They spoke ill about him and then in the Masjid a man who attributes himself to the Sunnah said derogatory words about Aishah. So my father hit the pulpit and explained, and for a fact I know it was the first time anyone exposed the belief of the Shi'ah on a pulpit in the United States of America. May Allah grant my father a long life full of deeds. He deemed it necessary because it was very normal back then to see someone tell you I was Sunni and now I am Shi'ah.

After the Khutbah of my father, the president of the society deemed what my father did in talking about the Shi'ah as Fitnah. He banned my father from a Masjid my father established and he was among the people my father brought

into the Masjid. He went on to cause more harm and one day when he did some certain type of harm to us, I heard my father say may Allah blind his eyes. And by the way because of that Khutbah, until today my father is not permitted to give Khutbah in that Masjid and he was a founder of that Masjid when it was built. The days went on, the months on, the years went on and we lost touch with that man. Everyone goes on his own way and we forgot about him. Fifteen years later Wallahil-'Adheem I was in a cemetery burying the mother of one of my students, I was on a higher area speaking over the grave and there was the crowd of people there, and from a distance a blind man comes and he approaches with a young boy leading him. When I saw him as I was speaking, it distracted me and I was lost for words. After the burial I immediately headed to this man, I said Salaamu 'Alaykum and he said 'Alaykumus-Salaam. I said are you so and so? He said yes, who are you? I said I am Shaykh Musa's son and he said oh. He possibly forgot what he did and after a superficial talk he left and I left.

I went to my father and I said do you know who I saw? I told my father and he said Alhamdulillah, he was actually happy that I met that man. I said to my father, you are not surprised he is blind? He said no, why should I be? I said you made Du'aa on him one day. He said when so I reminded him of the details and he said Wallahi you are right, he remembered when he harmed us and he did this and that. Of course after that my father has forgiven him and forgiven every Muslim who did way more than that to us, but the point is the arrows reach Allah. Had I not met him at the cemetery I would have thought oh he did what he did, we made Du'aa and that is it, but the arrows of Du'aa float in the sky for the command of Allah to say now is the right time. It is not up to you when the time is, it is up to Allah.

Do you think what is going on in the world today (from the east to the west and from the north to the south) is by chance? Wallahi all it takes is the Du'aa of one, one finger to Allah at the right moment and with the sincere heart will decimate nations.

Ash-Shaafi'ee said:

أَتَهْزَأُ بِالْدُّعَاءِ وَتَزِدُّهُ ، وَمَا تَدْرِي بِمَا صَنَعَ الدُّعَاءُ
سَهَامُ اللَّيْلِ لَا تَخْطِي ، وَلَكِنْ لَهَا أَمَدٌ وَلِلْأَمَدِ انْقِضَاءُ

You mock Du'aa and you spurn it, you do not know what Du'aa has done. The arrows of the night do not miss, rather they have a destiny and they will reach it.

Before I conclude I must mention this, I cannot go without mentioning this one. In the second volume of Sifat As-Safwah (صفة الصفوة) and the sixth volume of Seera A'laam An-Nubulaa' (سير أعلام النبلاء), Qutaybah Ibn Muslim al-Baahili went in an army to Khurasaan to fight the Turks. He gets shocked, the army

opposing him is ten times more than his army. It is a horrific scene, so he shouted where is Muhammad Ibn Waasi', where is Muhammad Ibn Waasi'? The soldiers went out to seek what their general is asking for, they wanted to go and find this man. They found him and he was leaning on a spear raising his finger, looking at his finger and at the sky. Qutaybah said now it is time to move on. Now it is time to move on, that is all he needed to know. When he knew the status of him, that is all he needed to know. He said the finger of Muhammad Ibn Waasi' is more beloved to me than one thousand wielding swords in the hands of one thousand strong soldiers. That little finger is stronger than a thousand soldiers. It may be a finger made of blood, veins and bones, but when it connects in Du'aa with Allah it is dangerous. After the victory, the general went to his soldier and he asked him what were you doing when you were raising your finger? He said I was connecting the path. He sure was connecting the path, not a worldly path but the path between them and Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala.

Now is the season of Du'aa. Whatever is on your mind (personal or for the Ummah), do it now, and you have a duty on you to not forget your Muslim brothers who are oppressed and hurt in your Du'aa.

لا تسألن بني آدم حاجة

Do not ask the sons of Adam anything.

وسل الذي أبوابه لا تحجب

And ask the One who does not close His door. I close my door, Allah does not close His door.

الله يغضب إن تركت سؤاله

Allah gets mad if you do not ask Him.

وبني آدم حين يُسأل يغضب

And the sons of Adam when asked get mad. Like me, you ask me and I am going to get mad but Allah is different.

...وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَى... ﴿النحل: ٦٠﴾

And for Allah is the highest description. (Surat an-Nahl: 60)

Revive Abandoned Worships

A successful businessman with Allah seeks all that which pleases Allah and your Ibaadah in itself is a business transaction. I did not bring that terminology from myself, it is directly out of the Qur'an:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿فَاطِر: ٢٩﴾

Verily, those who recite the Book of Allah (this Qur'an), and perform As-Salat (Iqamat As-Salat), and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a (sure) tradegain that will never perish. (Surat Faatir: 29)

Reciting the Qur'an, performing the Salah and spending in charity both secretly and openly, those are matters of Ibaadah. What about it? They hope for a sure tradegain with Allah that will never perish. Allah called it a tradegain (a business transaction), but a transaction that will never perish and it is a win win deal.

One thing that happens is that most people tend to get locked in on certain Ibaadaat and do not go beyond that to others, and over time some Ibaadaat become strange, abandoned or neglected. There is a long list of those actually but today Inshaa Allah we will talk about three of them.

MAKING ISTIGHFAAR BEFORE FAJR

The first one is asking Allah for forgiveness (making Istighfaar) before Fajr (before the call of Athaan). This is different to Qiyaam and this is different to Taraweeh. A worshipper seeks what pleases Allah in different forms and fashions, that is Ibaadah.

...وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾ الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ ﴿١٧﴾ آل عمران

And Allah is All Seer of the (His) slaves. Those who say: "Our Lord! We have indeed believed, so forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the

Fire.” They are those who are patient ones, those who are true (in Faith, words, and deeds), and obedient with sincere devotion in worship to Allah. Those who spend [give the Zakat and alms in the Way of Allah] and those who pray and beg Allah’s Pardon in the last hours of the night. (Surat Aali Imraan: 15-17)

At the end of those verses, Allah says:

وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

Sahar (سحر) is the end of the night, right before Fajr. That is why Suhoor (سحور) is called Suhoor, because it is at the end of the night. After you do Qiyaam, after you recite the Qur’an and remember Allah, then you are going to go have a meal with your family right before Fajr. Slip away and ask Allah for forgiveness right before Fajr. There is so much reward in it and so much honour in it that you fall under the verse:

وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

We said that Ramadhaan is an Imaanic therapy to start some more Ibaadaat and to better yourself. Start gradually in this, start slow. Maybe five minutes before Fajr or maybe three minutes before Fajr, go sit and make Istighfaar. Do not listen to this and get all hyped up and inspired and then go do hours, because sometimes that is a Shaytaan tactic. One gets inspired at something and the Shaytaan gets one to exert all his effort in one night, and then he leaves it. Ibaadah is like when you buy a new car. They tell you that you have to break in the engine bit by bit, do not go and drive it at seventy miles per hour from the first day. You have to break the engine in. What little of Ibaadah you do that continues is better than a lump sum that vanishes.

While everyone is sitting at the table eating Suhoor and breakfast, conversing in possibly vain talk and sometimes sinful talk, take a step away and go do Istighfaar. Say Astaghfirullah seventy to a hundred times like the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, or make Istighfaar in any fashion or form. That is the beginning of a new Ibaadah in your life.

All the times are good for Istighfaar, but this time is a time recommended in the Qur’an. Do it and you will be among those praised by Allah in the Qur’an. You do it and Inshaa Allah you will get the forgiveness of Allah.

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١٠﴾ نوح: ﴿١٠﴾

“I said (to them): ‘Ask forgiveness from your Lord; Verily, He is Oft Forgiving.’” (Surat Nooh: 10)

Allah will forgive those who seek forgiveness. If you have financial problems or you are a couple having fertility problems, Istighfaar is by a clear verse a medication for all that and the best time is that time by Suhoor.

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١٠﴾ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا ﴿١١﴾ وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴿نوح﴾

"I said (to them): 'Ask forgiveness from your Lord; Verily, He is Oft Forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance; and give you increase in wealth and children, and bestow on you gardens and bestow on you rivers.'" (Surat Nooh: 10-12)

Do you want strength? Do you want a position or a promotion? Are you trying to get into a university and they keep declining and rejecting you? Wallahi head to Istighfaar and see.

وَيَا قَوْمِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَىٰ قُوَّتِكُمْ... ﴿هود: ٥٢﴾

"And O my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him, He will send you (from the sky) abundant rain, and add strength to your strength." (Surat Hud: 52)

Strength to your strength. It may be a position, a university you are trying to into or a promotion at work.

Do you want to enjoy life?

وَأَنِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُمَتِّعْكُمْ مَتَاعًا حَسَنًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى...

Seek the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance, that He may grant you good enjoyment, for a term appointed.

Ibn Katheer said this is in this life. Then the second sentence says:

...وَيُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِي فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُ... ﴿هود: ٣﴾

And bestow His abounding Grace to every owner of grace (i.e. the one who helps and serves needy and deserving, physically and with his wealth, and even with good words). (Surat Hud: 3)

This is the life after, so you get both out of Istighfaar.

Do you want to be saved from evil? Do you want to be saved from punishment of sins in this life and in the life after?

...وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿الأنفال: ٣٣﴾

Nor will He punish them while they seek (Allah's) Forgiveness. (Surat al-Anfaal: 33)

The mercy of Allah descends upon you with Istighfaar.

...لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿النمل: ٤٦﴾

Why seek you not the Forgiveness of Allah, that you may receive mercy? (Surat an-Naml: 46)

If you have the mercy of Allah, what else do you need? Now tell me is it worth it? Start in this blessed day and make a determination to make it a habit right before Fajr. Wake up a little bit early and make Istighfaar. Start with your tongue and make sure your heart is at the same pace as your tongue. Be consistent and Wallahi you are going to see a change. If you doubt that, you are doubting the Qur'an.

Now a side issue, why is the pre dawn time specified in the Qur'an for a more special significance? We know all times are good for Istighfaar but why is it specified? Because that is the start of the day. A fresh, clean slate, that is what you need so Allah can bless your day and so you will not be deprived of blessing. When you start, you start on a clean slate (forgiven from Allah) so Allah will bless your day. You are heading to work (a materialistic world and life) and Allah wants you to know the exact reason and purpose for why you were created, so make Istighfaar before your day begins. The entire one third end of the night is a blessed time. I have talked about Qiyaam plenty and about the one third end of the night, but this is a special moment out of the one third end of the night to seek forgiveness from Allah.

TAFAKKUR

The second Ibaadah that has become somewhat strange is the Ibaadah of Tafakkur (تفكر), to ponder and to contemplate. To contemplate the names, qualities and attributes of Allah and the power of Allah. Pondering over the universal verses of Allah, the sky, the earth, the mountains, the day and the night, the wind and the textual signs in the Qur'an. Ponder over the verses in the Qur'an, ponder over the creation of Allah and His power in creating. Pondering? Yes pondering. Did you turn Sufi on us suddenly? No, this is a worship mentioned in the Qur'an.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿آل عمران: ١٩٠﴾

Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. (Surat Aali Imraan: 190)

What does the end of it say?

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth.

يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

What does Tafakkur mean? That is ponder. They think about the creation of the heavens and the earth and they ponder about it. They think about it and when they ponder over that, where does that pondering lead them? Look at the next part of the verse:

...رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿آل
عمران: ١٩١﴾

(Saying): “Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.” (Surat Aali Imraan: 191)

When they ponder, they come to the right conclusion in their Tawheed. It establishes Tawheed within you.

There are many other verses to encourage you to ponder. There are hundreds of verses in the Qur’an encouraging this.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا ۚ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ ۚ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿الرعد: ٣﴾

And it is He Who spread out the earth, and placed therein firm mountains and rivers and of every kind of fruits He made Zawjayn Ithnayn (two in pairs - may mean two kinds or it may mean of two sorts, e.g. black and white, sweet and sour, small and big, etc) He brings the night as a cover over the day. Verily, in these things, there are Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc) for people who reflect. (Surat ar-Ra’d: 3)

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطْعٌ مُّتَجَاوِرَاتٌ وَجَنَّاتٌ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ يُسْقَىٰ بِمَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَنُفِضِلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الْأُكْلِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿الرعد: ٤﴾

And in the earth are neighbouring tracts, and gardens of vines, and green crops (fields etc), and date-palms, growing out two or three from a single stem root, or otherwise (one stem root for every palm), watered with the same water, yet some of them We make more excellent than others to eat. Verily, in these things, there are Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs) for the people who understand. (Surat ar-Ra’d: 4)

This is the Ibaadah that should flow with your other Ibaadaat like a soul flows in a body. It must be restrained by revelation. You cannot take it as a source, it is a matter that must be restrained by revelation. The worship of contemplating and pondering unlocks the heart and brightens the heart with that which the heart was blocked off from due to the tar of sins (it removes that tar). This Ibaadah opens the hearts to the meaning of the Qur’an and brings dosage after dosage of Imaan. This Ibaadah attains you certainty in Allah, fear in Allah, love of Allah, hope in Allah, reliance on Allah and continuous repentance (Inaabah) to Allah. This Ibaadah softens your heart, it softens those hard hearts. When you

constantly contemplate the power of Allah, it humbles you. When you contemplate the forgiveness and generosity of Allah, it entices you to do better. Contemplating the verses and signs of Allah is soap that cleans your mind and your soul.

Ponder in every matter that you see, make it a habit and establish yourself in doing that. Abu Sulaymaan ad-Daraani said I never left my house and laid my eyes on anything, except I see the blessing of Allah in it or His power over it. Let me repeat that because this sums up this whole matter. Abu Sulaymaan said I never left my house and laid my eyes on anything, except that I looked to the blessing of Allah in it or His power over it. Anything he sees, he looks to the blessing of Allah in it or the power of Allah over it. Every time you look at the sky, ponder who raised that sky with no pillars? Look at the sky and then look at the walls of your house. Every few months you need to call the handyman to fix it, yet a creation as magnificent as the sky is sustained and maintained by Allah year after year. When you are walking out of the house or walking out of the Masjid, look, ponder, think and say the One who did that to the sky is able to answer that Du'aa that I just made at the Masjid. It fills your heart with assurance, that is what it does. Do you understand now what pondering is?

Sit and visualise the details of the life after (the Aakhirah). Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak once visited Sahl Ibn Ali and he saw him zoned out thinking. Today if you see someone zoned out, you tell them to snap out of it. Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak said where did your thinking take you? Sahl Ibn Ali said I was at the Siraat. Sahl was daydreaming how he is going to cross over that bridge over Jahannam, that is what he was thinking about. In Musnad Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi, Anas Ibn Maalik asked the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam where am I going to meet you on the Judgment Day so I can get your Shafaa'ah (your intercession)? The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said you will find me by the Siraat. He said what if I do not find you there? He said by the scale. He said what if I do not find you there? He said by the Kawthar. Do you think someone would ask such a question without having pondered over that matter and thought about the details of the Aakhirah and the Judgment Day for a long time? Ponder over the blessings Allah bestowed upon you. Ponder over Jannah, its mansions and the neighbourhood your palace is going to be in. Ponder over how big your front and back yard is going to be, how big your tent is going to be and how happy your family is going to be when you are reunited in a worry free life. That pondering gets you to escape the trials and difficulties of the prison of this world. It will bring you peace and contentment and place it and embed it in your heart. Ponder being called by Allah to a meeting with Allah. It will refresh your love to Him, it will bring you a heavy dosage of Taqwa and it will instill strong resistance against the Shaytaan because you want that meeting. Ponder over Hell, the misery of the inhabitants of Hell and their torture. It will melt your heart, get you to regret your past, revive Tawbah in you and make you plan a better future based on Imaan and Taqwa. This Ibaadah takes you to Yaqeen (certainty) in Allah.

When a Bedouin far from civilization and education sat and pondered, it led him to something better than most of the educated people of our time would know.

Camel dung indicates there was camels, footprints indicate there was travel, a sky with its constellations and the sea with its waves, all that shows there is the All Knowing, the All Powerful. Thinking about those matters got him to realise Allah.

TABATTUL

The third and final matter and neglected one is:

تَبَتُّلٌ وَالْإِنْقِطَاعُ إِلَى اللَّهِ

To sever yourself from all worldly matters and go to Allah.

Every one of these worships is in the Qur'an.

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾ الزمزل: ٨

And remember the Name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with a complete devotion. (Surat al-Muzzammil: 8)

Devote yourself totally for Allah. One of the nicknames of Maryam 'alayhas-salaam was al-Batool (البتول). She was called al-Batool from this word (Tabattul (تبتل)) because she severed herself or refrained from marriage so she can worship, and that is the terminology Tabattul. This does not mean you go to a cave or a church and you sit there away from worldly matters.

There are three types of Tabattul. The first type is like the Catholics and monks do, they go live in a place of worship with no marriage and other essential worldly matters. That is not Islam. Allah created man and knows what suits man, and part of Islam is to get married. Putting them in such places creates and generates pedophiles, not dedicated worshippers. They have come to realise that now, which Islam taught us fourteen centuries ago. They are thinking about changing it but Islam told us that because our guidance comes from Allah the Creator who knows what best suits us.

The second type of Tabattul (devotion) is to take a certain time out of your day or night or the one third end of the night, and be in seclusion with Allah. Sever this world behind you and spend some time with Allah. Five minutes, twenty minutes, whatever it might be. Ibaadah, Salah, Dhikr, Du'aa and reciting the Qur'an, devoting yourself totally to Allah with a complete devotion. And of course among the best times (from the day and night) for Ibaadah is the one third end of the night.

The third type of Tabattul is to put your mind and soul in the life after with full devotion, and there are only few of the masses of the Ummah who Allah blesses with this. Physically they are with you and they are people you see with you physically, but their mind is absent in heavenly matters. People who when they speak, you think they are talking to you and one hundred percent thinking about what you are saying, but their mind is telling them is what I am saying Halaal or Haraam? Does it please or displease Allah? You may see them sad for some sadness that happens, but inside they are attached to Allah with contentment and acceptance of the destiny and decree of Allah. In a nutshell, it is really someone who is physically with you here, but spiritually his mind is devoted in trying to please Allah. He is present and absent at the same time. That is among the levels of Ihsaan, may Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala grant us and you this level.

Befriend The Qur'an

There is a deep relationship and a strong one between the Qur'an and Ramadhaan.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى
وَالْفُرْقَانِ ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhaan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

That is pertaining to the month, and pertaining to the night:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ ... ﴿الدخان: ٣﴾

We sent it (this Qur'an) down on a blessed night [(i.e. night of Qadar) in the month of Ramadhaan, the 9th month of the Islamic calendar]. (Surat ad-Dukhaan: 3)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴿القدر: ١﴾

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the night of Al-Qadar (Decree). (Surat al-Qadar: 1)

So is there a discrepancy or a conflict? There are two verses saying it was revealed in the Night of Decree and another one saying it was revealed in the month of Ramadhaan. Orientalists claim that there is a discrepancy in this matter. If you go to Sunan an-Nasaa'ee and al-Haakim, Ibn Abbaas and Ibn Jareer in a different saying said the entire Qur'an was revealed in Laylat al-Qadar. Then it was taken down from the seventh heaven to the first heaven closest to us, and over the course of twenty three years it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

The relationship between Ramadhaan and Qur'an is deeper than one thinks. You know the famous story we all know when Jibreel 'alayhis-salaam went to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He grabbed him and he said:

اقْرَأْ ، اِقْرَأْ

And he scared the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Ibn Ishaq, Abu Sulaymaan ad-Dimashqi, Ibn al-Jawzi and others said that this occurred in Ramadhan. It is even deeper than when you know the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam used to review the Qur’an with Jibreel every single Ramadhan and twice the final time he was living sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Jibreel would read and the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam listened, or the opposite. Some scholars said this is the time when he would tell him the affirmed and abrogated verses, and it is possible that this is the time when he knew and learned the Tafseer. Allah sent the best revelation on the best Messenger in the best month in the best night (the Night of Decree). All that shows you how solid the bond between the Qur’an and the month of Ramadhan is.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur’an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

A verse like that and an expression like that only goes to show you how Qur’an in Ramadhan has a virtue and an excellence unlike any other excellence. That is how our pious predecessors understood it and that is why in Ramadhan they dropped everything for Qur’an. Most of them even passed their classes of Hadith to focus on reading the Qur’an. Before we mention a glimpse of those legendary men in Ramadhan, let us look closely at how our pious predecessors were on a normal day and then we will give a quick glimpse as to how they were in Ramadhan.

One time Abu Bakr Ibn Ayyaash Rahimahullah pointed to a room in his house and told his family I read the Qur’an every day in that room for sixty years. Every day he would finish the Qur’an in that room for sixty years. When he was on his deathbed, his sister began to cry and he said why are you crying? You see that corner of the house, he said I finished the Qur’an in that corner eighteen thousand times. When ath-Thahabi talks about him, he said he used to read the Qur’an every single day once (finish the Qur’an) for forty years (approximately fourteen thousand times). There are different narrations depending on the different circumstances, the settings he was in or talking about.

Ath-Thahabi continues on to say the Sunnah of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam is not to read the Qur’an in less than three nights and the Sunnah of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam is better to follow. It is really not time to go over the Fiqh issue of the permissibility of reading the Qur’an in less than three to seven days, but there are Ahaadith disliking and discouraging one to read the Qur’an in less than three days (in another one it is less than seven days). The reason is one will not be able to comprehend it but just as there were some of the Salaf who did not like to finish the Qur’an in less than three to seven days, there are those who did. It is a disputed issue and it is possible, for those who say it is impossible.

However, some of the Salaf had different Khitmahs of the Qur'an at the same time and it amazed me when I read this. They had one for example for speed reading, so they can get reward (ten deeds per letter). Those ones were about less than three days, they would finish it in less than three days like the ones you hear of who would finish it every day. At the same time parallel to that, they would have an ongoing Khitmah that is slow recitation to contemplate and analyse it and that would sometimes take weeks, months and possibly years. Some of them would have a third parallel Khitmah to recite the Qur'an and teach it to their students, which would be slower than the previous two. We do not want to get into that Fiqh dispute since we are now at a level where sadly there are those of the Ummah who may go an entire lifetime not completing the Qur'an once. The superb forerunners of the Ummah today are those who developed a bond, dusting the Qur'an off from Ramadhān to Ramadhān. Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdi used to finish the Qur'an every single two days, meaning he would read half of the Qur'an every single day. This is not Ramadhān we are talking about, this is them on a normal day.

How can one abandon reading the Qur'an when he is abandoning recitation of the Qur'an, the one in which Allah said that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam says:

...يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿الفرقان: ٣٠﴾

"O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'an (neither listened to it, nor acted on its laws and orders)." (Surat al-Furqaan: 30)

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam complains and testifies against you who abandon the Book of Allah. As Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah says, this is one of the ways that they abandon the Qur'an. Abandoning recitation is one of the ways of abandoning the Qur'an. It is horror and heart melting to even think that you will stand before Allah as a defendant with no other than the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam as a plaintiff against you, pointing to you and saying:

يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

Those who do not know Arabic and I am not condoning that because the language of the Qur'an is essential for the identity of a Muslim. You can read some of that in the introduction of the Noble Qur'an by Muhsin Khan and al-Hilaali and before them Ibn Taymiyyah, how they stated that the Arabic language is an identity. We are against nationalism but the Arabic language is essential. But assume you do not know Arabic now, in the time you are trying to learn it do not abandon the Qur'an in English. You are not going to get the same reward of ten deeds per letter but Inshaa Allah you will get some type of reward.

Who can get enough of the word of Allah, the speech of Allah? Who can get enough from the medicine that is a cure for the heart, the soul and the body? The

Qur'an is a cure from doubts and desires. The Qur'an is a cure from worries, anxiety and depression.

Some people when I tell them to recite the Qur'an to relieve the problems, they call me the next day and say well I am still depressed, I still have the doubts. I tell them when a doctor gives medication and we are talking about similar to that anti depressant medication, one of the things he says about some of them is keep taking it for three or four weeks for the medicine to kick in and you get its affect, and after that do not ever stop taking it. The Qur'an needs close friendship to take effect. It needs consistent persistent dedication and recitation in order to see its affect.

Look at one of the Du'aas that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam taught us for worry, depression and anxiety.

مَا أَصَابَ أَحَدًا قَطُّ هَمٌّ وَلَا حَزَنٌ فَقَالَ : اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ، ابْنُ
عَبْدِكَ ، ابْنُ أُمَّتِكَ ، نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ ، مَاضٍ فِي حُكْمِكَ ، عَدُلٌ فِي
قَضَاؤِكَ ، أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ ، سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ ، أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي
كِتَابِكَ ، أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ ، أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ
عِنْدَكَ ، أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رَيْعَ قَلْبِي ، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي ، وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِي ،
وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said no one makes that Du'aa except his worries, his sadness and depression will go away, he will be relieved of it and Allah will replace it with happiness and ease.

Shaykh your prescription is not working, you always get that. I say okay brother, when is the last time you read Qur'an? Shaykh you told me to read this Du'aa not Qur'an? Just tell me when is the last time you read Qur'an? Well last Ramadhaan, a couple of years ago, many days ago or I cannot remember. Do you know an essential sentence of that Du'aa is:

أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رَيْعَ قَلْبِي ، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي

In that Du'aa you are asking Allah to take your worry, your problem and your sadness away by making the Qur'an the spring of your heart and the brightness to your chest. I ask you by Allah, how can the Du'aa work if the Qur'an is sitting collecting dust when part of your Du'aa is replacing that anxiety with the

happiness of the Qur'an? Of course it is not going to work, I could have told you that. The Du'aa needs recitation of the Qur'an to work with it, it is a combination of medication.

I know a man in prison, Wallahil-'Adheem they had him in solitary confinement for a long time. The psychiatrist comes by that unit to check in on the people. Once or twice a week he walks by and does his round and they have to do it because that is an area where people snap and lose their minds frequently. When they would pass the cell of this man, the psychiatrist says to him do you need anything? The man refuses to answer and sometimes he will say no. When the psychiatrist passes by, the inmates run to that little window because it is nice to lay your eyes on a human walking, that is a beautiful sight when you have not seen that for years. It is nice to merely say hi and bye to another human being and see something other than your four walls. It amazed the psychiatrist that this man is sitting in his cell 24/7 (on a good day 23/7) and he is content and happy, he does not even look at the window. The psychiatrist was amazed, he asked why are you so happy and at ease? You never ask for anything. He told the psychiatrist I have my best friend and the Qur'an was right next to him, he showed him the Qur'an.

For one who understands what the Qur'an is, what else do you need? Do you need someone to talk to? Would you rather talk to creation and not the Creator? If you want the miraculous affect of the Qur'an to take place, befriend the Qur'an so it will be a means of cure for all ailments (spiritual and otherwise and raising of your ranks which is the most important). Befriend the Qur'an if you want to understand it. Friends never share secrets until they get very well acquainted, then they begin to exchange gifts and then you exchange secrets, and then they begin to console and comfort each other. Begin to befriend the Qur'an so you can see its miraculous affects and benefits. Wallahil-'Adheem there is not a friend you can befriend better than the friendship of the Qur'an. If you are lonely, head to the Qur'an. If you are sad, open the Qur'an. If you are depressed, listen to and read the Qur'an. It is a cure for all that and more. If you are happy, read the Qur'an as your way of thanking Allah.

...لَنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ... ﴿ابراهيم: ٧﴾

"If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My Blessings)." (Surat Ibraheem: 7)

What more do you want from friendship that will land you to Paradise and Firdaws? Recite and elevate, recite and ascend, the elevator of the Qur'an that will land you in your final and ultimate destiny.

Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah says harsh words about this. He said whoever the Qur'an does not cure, may Allah not cure him. And whoever the Qur'an is not sufficient for, may nothing be sufficient for him:

من لم يشفه القرآن فلا شفاء له ، ومن لم يكفه الله فلا كفاه الله

It is Ramadhaan now. It is still not late, even though some days passed by in Ramadhaan. Roll up your sleeves, take an oath and begin a new friendship with this friendly and abandoned book (the Qur'an). Wallahil-Adheem there is no contact you can add to your iPhone better than downloading the text and audio of the word of Allah. When you need someone to talk to and you are looking at your contacts, go to the Qur'an and listen to it and recite it.

Az-Zuhri said the month of Ramadhaan is the month of recitation and it is the month of feeding the poor, those two things and there is no third to them. This is the month in which ash-Shaafi'ee used to recite the Qur'an sixty times. When Ramadhaan came, it was described that Imaam Ahmad sits in the Masjid and constantly reads Qur'an. They said all we see him doing is making Wudhu outside, returning to read Qur'an and making his Salah. The students of Abul-Qaasim Ibn Asaakir said in every day of his last ten days he would finish the Qur'an and that is other than what he leads in Salah. Maalik abandons all his classes and the Hadith class to recite Qur'an. Qur'an in Ramadhaan was something they got closer to Allah with. It was the thing they deemed that gets you closest to Allah (not even teaching Hadith). They valued and knew what this verse meant:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhaan in which was revealed the Qur'an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

Keep in mind we mention these supreme examples as we always do but most cannot do that. It is possible but most cannot do it, but we mention that so if one does a small percentage of what these men do then he will be among the successful Bi'ithnihi Ta'aala. We always look at those above us in matters of Deen and we look at those below us in matters of Dunya. Also, do not get inspired and say tonight Wallahi I am going to go try to do what ash-Shaafi'ee Rahimahullah did and read the Qur'an twice. It is not appropriate for you to go and do a lump sum that is going to stop you from finishing and continuing on. Look at the Hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari:

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ

The most beloved deeds to Allah are those which continue even if they are little.

Start off by what you can do. Maybe a few verses, maybe a page, maybe a Juzz or maybe a few Juzz, but whatever you know you can continue not just for Ramadhaan but for after Ramadhaan. Over time you will see what an addiction the Qur'an is and then over time you are going to see that you need to up the

dosage of the Qur'an little by little. Take advantage of what is left of Ramadhan, it is not too late. It is only a matter of days and nights before they mention our names and say may Allah have mercy on him, we do not know if we will live until next Ramadhan. Hop on that elevator, befriend that loyal friend and cling on to the rope of Allah (the Qur'an). May Allah make the Qur'an the spring and delight of your heart and means of granting you Firdaws.

The Power of the Qur'an

We are still talking about the relationship between this blessed month and our Qur'an.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhaan in which was revealed the Qur'an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

Did you know that this Book that Muslims neglect and abandon today was a Book the non believers of Quraysh feared during the time of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam? They really feared its affect on their hearts and they really felt it would change them. They warned against it out of spite against the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and his message, but they also feared its affect. They feared it would change them and they feared it would move them just by merely listening to it. The reason is because they were eloquent masters of the Arabic language and when the Qur'an was recited to the non believers of Quraysh, it penetrated their hearts. That is the non believers.

When the verses penetrated the hearts of the believers, we have authentic narrations from our Salaf that some fell unconscious and some of them fell dead. Ath-Tha'labi was a scholar of the fourth Hijri century and he compiled an entire book of stories of those who the meaning of a verse killed them. They read a verse, it hit home and they fell dead. Some of the stories in that book are exaggerated but there are some authentic stories in there. Do not be surprised. The Qur'an is so strong it kills? What are you saying Ahmad? It is deeper than that, it crumbles mountains down.

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ... ﴿الحشر: ٢١﴾

Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rending asunder by the fear of Allah. (Surat al-Hashr: 21)

But how come I do not feel anything? Hearts have become harder than rocks and mountains when they do not understand the Qur'an.

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً...

﴿البقرة: ٧٤﴾

Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. (Surat al-Baqarah: 74)

It is so powerful that our beloved sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam lived under the most extreme hardships but he did not get any grey hair because of those. Torture from Quraysh, the death of all his children before he died except one, the death of his beloved wife, the death of his uncle, companions dying and disbelievers mocking him and harming him, but he did not get any grey hair. A few Surahs in the Qur'an give him grey hair.

شَيَّبَتْنِي هُودٌ وَأَخَوَاتُهَا

Hud and its sisters gave me grey hair.

Do not be surprised. That is what happens when you understand the meaning of the Qur'an. The Qur'an swept the tyrants of the Qurayshians off their feet when they heard it. In Sahih al-Bukhari, Ibn Abbaas said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam prostrated in Surat an-Najm and the Muslims made Sujood behind him, the Jinn made Sujood behind him and the Mushrikeen made Sujood behind him. What? The Mushrikeen? This was after the fifth year from the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam getting revelation, while tensions between our beloved sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and Quraysh were mounting and they were at their peak. It was a time when Abu Jahl threatened the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and he said if I see you prostrating by the Ka'bah I am going to step on your neck.

One day the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam enters by the Ka'bah. The non believers are there meeting and the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam is making Salah. He raises his voice in recitation and just imagine how beautiful the Qur'an flows out of the blessed vocal chords of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Imagine with me how mighty, dignified and humbling the words of Allah were flowing from the lips of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. You go on the internet and you see a clip of a child or a famous reciter reciting Qur'an and your heart trembles. You cannot turn it off and you listen to it a second and a third and a fourth and a fifth time, over and over again. That child reciting or that famous reciter got the Qur'an through a series of men over the course of fourteen centuries, so just imagine with me how beautiful the Qur'an flows from the first man Allah revealed the Qur'an to. Imagine how beautiful it was from the man who listened to the Qur'an from Jibreel 'alayhis-salaam.

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ ﴿١﴾ مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يَنْطِقُ
عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ﴿٣﴾ ﴿النجم﴾

By the star when it goes down, (or vanishes). Your companion (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has neither gone astray nor has erred. Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. (Surat an-Najm: 1-3)

He recites and he recites and then he gets to the end:

أَفَمِنْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾
وَأَنْتُمْ سَامِدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ فَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ وَاعْبُدُوا ﴿٦٢﴾ ﴿النجم﴾

Do you then wonder at this recital (the Qur'an)? And you laugh at it and weep not, wasting your (precious) lifetime in pastime and amusements (singing, etc). So fall you down in prostration to Allah, and worship Him (Alone). (Surat an-Najm: 59-62)

He went into Sujood and the powerful Qur'an overwhelmed and swept the Qurayshians off their feet and they went down in Sujood. They could not even control their own limbs when they heard the Qur'an. A few moments of Qur'an demolished the Kufr and arrogance in the hearts of the Pharaohs of this Ummah. What happened? You guys were just saying you are going to step on his neck if he prostrates and now you are prostrating with him? Who could have believed that?

The people who sought refuge in Abyssinia (Habashah) returned to Makkah after they heard this story. The word got to them that the Qurayshians made Sujood. Who makes Sujood but a believer? Or so they thought. The power of the Qur'an swept them off their feet. When they raised their heads out of Sujood, the dominating affect of the Qur'an began to fade because they are not listening to it now. Darkness began to surge and submerge their hearts once again. They said what on earth did we do? We prostrated by Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to the Lord of Muhammad? It was the strength, power and beauty of the Qur'an. Why were they moved and we are not moved? Because they were pioneers in the Arabic language. They were at the peak of eloquence in the Arabic language and when they heard the Qur'an, all of them knew beyond any doubt that it was a miracle from Allah and only a revelation from Allah.

Turn to the Qur'an and let it wash you inside out. Let it purify you. Let it make you a new person. Recite it and understand it. Try to read it not looking at the next page when you are going to flip over the page. Try to understand it and contemplate it. You have one of the top Tafseers translated in English (Tafseer

Ibn Katheer) and I believe that is the biggest accomplishment in the work of translation in our time.

You have some who want to sit and think they can read a verse from the Qur'an (in English sometimes) and give you their interpretation of what it means, or they open Bukhari in English or even in Arabic and they want to toss a Hadith at you. You can bring ten of the most eloquent people of our time and each one of them could draw a different and distinct meaning from a verse. We do not care about what all ten say, we go to the likes of Ibn Katheer and we see what they said in it. We do not care how anyone interprets Hadith, we open the likes of Fath Al-Baari (the elucidation on Sahih Muslim) and Sharh An-Nawawi on Sahih Muslim and we see what they said. Some think they can open Sahih Muslim without reading Sharh An-Nawawi or books like that, and toss a Hadith at you that may have been abrogated.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam went out of his way to emphasise the reward for recitation of the Qur'an. We already know the deed is ten folds minimum for each letter, but look at how the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam went out of his way to stress it. He said if you read the Qur'an you get one deed, that deed is ten folds. Alif is a letter, Laam is a letter and Meem is a letter (meaning all three are not one letter), for each one you get ten deeds and for those three you get thirty. Look at how he went out of his way to explain and show you the reward. I calculated the reward of one who completes the Qur'an from cover to cover, one who starts with al-Faatihah on page one and ends with page six hundred and four in the version with fifteen lines. When you recite the entire Qur'an from al-Faatihah to an-Naas, you get approximately thirty three million and two hundred thousand rewards. Did you hear that? That is on a normal day but take it a step further, it is worth way more than that in the month of Ramadhaan. Thirty three million and two hundred thousand deeds on a normal day when you complete the entire Qur'an demolish and blow away thirty three million and two hundred thousand sins into ashes.

Someone might say I do not know the Qur'an Shaykh. I cannot complete it in Ramadhaan, what can I do? There is no verse and there is no Hadith directly recommending one to read the Qur'an cover to cover. Yes Jibreel went over the entire Qur'an with the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam during the month of Ramadhaan and the Salaf also recommended that you read the entire Qur'an, but read any part of the Qur'an (that is what is important). How do I read? Do the short Surahs count? Are they not part of the Qur'an? Who does not know the short Surahs? Who does not know al-Faatihah? Read them over and over and over.

Who does not know Surat al-Ikhlaas? In an authentic Hadith, Kalthoom Ibn al-Hadm loved Surat al-Ikhlaas so much and read it over and over that Allah told His Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to tell him that Allah loves him. In your car, sitting, standing, laying down or in your job, recite it and Allah loves you for loving it. Number one, Allah loves you. Number two, when you recite this Surah you get the reward as if you read one third of the Qur'an. Read it three times and you get the reward as if you read the entire Qur'an. Number three,

there are forty seven letters in Surat al-Ikhlaas so if you times that by ten you get four hundred and seventy deeds on a normal day (and on days like this it is multiple folds). Allah loves you, you get the reward of one third of the Qur'an and over four hundred and seventy deeds and more in Ramadhaan.

Do not be surprised. Now you are beginning to understand the quality and attribute of Al-Kareem. It could be one deed that tips your scale over on the Judgment Day.

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ
مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا... ﴿الأنبياء: ٤٧﴾

And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. (Surat al-Anbiyaa': 47)

A deed equivalent to a mustard seed is a deed so small that not a scale on this universe could weigh it. The multimillion dollar scales in the high tech labs could not weigh that tiny mustard seed of weight no matter how delicate their scales are, but Allah when He sets up the balances and scales on the Judgment Day will weigh it, will bring it and it will be accounted for.

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا
يَرَهُ ﴿٨﴾ ﴿الزلزلة﴾

So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. (Surat az-Zalzalah: 7-8)

But it is not only the deed factor, put that aside for a second. Reciting the Qur'an and never abandoning its recitation is means to attain intercession of the Qur'an, on top of the deeds that we are talking about. One reads the Qur'an in this life and his sins may end up outweighing his deeds, but the Qur'an comes to the rescue. The Qur'an speaks? Yes, it is going to come to your rescue. The One who made you speak in this life makes limbs speak in the life after. The One who made people walk on their feet in this life makes others walk on their heads on the Judgment Day.

...وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمِيَٰ وَبُكْمًا وَصُمًّا...
﴿الإسراء: ٩٧﴾

And We shall gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf. (Surat al-Israa': 97)

In Sahih Muslim, recite the Qur'an for on the Day of Resurrection it will come as an intercessor for those who recite it. Those who may be in a Judgment Day jam, a jam of all jams. A mother and a father could not get you out of that one but fasting and the Qur'an run to your rescue and aid. This is for sinners like us, sinners who are doing their best in recitation but on the Judgment Day their sins end up outweighing their deeds. In Musnad Ahmad, at-Tabaraani and al-Haakim, in an authentic Hadith the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said fasting on the Judgment Day will say O Rabb (Yaa Rabb), I prevented him from food and desires so accept intercession for him. The Qur'an comes running to you saying I prevented him from sleep during the night so accept intercession for him Yaa Allah. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam then said at the end of the Hadith, and they will be allowed to intercede.

In Muslim, Abu Umaamah reported that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said read the two radiant ones (al-Baqarah and Aali Imraan) for they will come on the Day of Resurrection like two clouds. They will come on the Judgment Day like two shades, they will come on the Judgment Day like two flocks of birds and in another narration outside Muslim, like canopies with light pleading for their companions.

How can you abandon the Qur'an after this?

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
أَعْمَى ﴿طه: ١٢٤﴾

But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur'an nor acts on its orders, etc) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection. (Surat Taha: 124)

Any type of turning away from the Qur'an falls under this Ayah, whether it is turning away in applying it or turning away in recitation. Do you know what Dhankaa (ضنكا) is? Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, Abdullah Ibn Masood and Abu Hurayrah said the Dhankaa in this verse means the grave will be tightened on him. Some scholars went on to say it is also a stressful life full of problems, anxiety and depression.

Do not miss out on listening to the Qur'an. There is immense reward and benefits in it, maybe not as much as reading it but there is definitely great reward and great benefits in listening to it. May Allah grant my father a long life full of deeds, Wallahi from being a baby until today it is exceptional and rare that he is not listening to the Qur'an. From those huge recorders in the 70s, to the vinyl records, to the eight track tapes, to the regular tape recorders, to the CDs and

now on his iPad. When he is not listening to the Qur'an or teaching it, he is like a fish out of water. May Allah shine your hearts, graves and houses with the brightness of the Qur'an and allow it to testify for you and be an intercession for you.

They Give to the Poor, the Orphan and the Captive

In Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim, Ibn Abbaas radhiallahu ‘anhuma said the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam was the most generous man, and he was the most generous in Ramadhaan when Jibreel ‘alayhis-salaam would come down and review the Qur’an with him. Jibreel would come down and review the Qur’an with him every single night during the nights of Ramadhaan. When Jibreel ‘alayhis-salaam would come and review the Qur’an with the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, he was more generous than the free blowing wind. Why did Ibn Abbaas radhiallahu ‘anhuma compare the generosity of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam to the free blowing wind? Number one, to show you how quick, fast and speedy he was – he was hastening to give charity at the speed of wind. Number two, it is also to show you that he did not discriminate. The wind touches everyone and that is how the charity of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam was – it touched everyone.

Ash-Shaafi’ee Rahimahullah said I wish for one to be generous in Ramadhaan, to follow in accordance with the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam – because many get occupied with worship and neglect the charity aspect. In previous Khawaatir, we mentioned how the Salaf said that Qur’an and charity in Ramadhaan have no third to them – meaning they have no equivalent to them.

When you are dealing with Allah, it is not about giving a lot – it is about giving, even if it is not a lot. One dollar could be worth more than a million. The Hadith in Sunan an-Nasaa’ee:

سَبَقَ دِرْهَمٌ مِائَةَ أَلْفِ دِرْهَمٍ

A Dirham surpassed a hundred thousand Dirhams.

One dollar can get you more reward than a million dollars. If all you have is two dollars and you give one dollar, you are giving half of your wealth. For a millionaire to get the same reward you got, he has to give millions in order for him to have given half of his wealth.

When you give charity, keep in mind that you should be humble. You should feel honoured that you were allowed to give. You should be overwhelmed that Allah gave you and you gave for the sake of Allah, and you should be ecstatic that someone accepted. What I am saying is you are only really doing yourself a favour.

...وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِأَنْفُسِكُمْ... ﴿البقرة: ٢٧٢﴾

And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves. (Surat al-Baqarah: 272)

If the poor beggar does not get it from you, Allah is going to provide him. Feel honoured that Allah honoured you, by allowing you to give him. What I am saying is give, say thank you to the one you gave and say Alhamdulillah to Allah. You are not doing anybody but yourself a favour.

Also keep in mind, do not belittle any good deed:

لَا تَحْقِرَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ شَيْئًا

Ibn Umar radhiallahu 'anhuma used to carry sugar, which would possibly be interpreted today to mean like candy. They would say why would you give this in charity? He said because I love it and Allah said:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ... ﴿آل عمران: ٩٢﴾

By no means shall you attain Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, etc; it means here Allah's Reward, i.e. Paradise), unless you spend (in Allah's Cause) of that which you love. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 92)

One time, Umar gave a grape. They said a grape? That does not quench a thirst or fill a stomach. He said:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴿الزلزلة: ٧﴾

So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. (Surat az-Zalzalah: 7)

On the scale, Allah will bring something that is the weight of a mustard seed, so he told them this grape is more than the weight of a mustard seed.

We told you how Abud-Dahdaah radhiallahu 'anhu read the verse:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا... ﴿البقرة: ٢٤٥﴾

Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan? (Surat al-Baqarah: 245)

He told the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, Allah wants a loan from us? The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said yes. He said give me your hand O Prophet of Allah, I give you my orchard of dates – that was where he was living,

and it was the best of many properties he owned. He told his wife we have given this to Allah and the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. She took her kids, took the food out of their mouths and pockets and put it down.

Give with kindness and secrecy and do not let anyone feel you are above them. The wealth you have is not even yours, do not think it is your wealth. In many verses in the Qur'an, you will find that Allah attributes this wealth to Himself, but then there are some verses where He attributes the wealth to us. There is no conflict – it is the wealth of Allah, but it is yours to be tested with. That is why it is yours – to be tested and nothing else.

Do not be materialistic and say I am poor. Do not ever do that because you are a walking millionaire, even if you do not have a penny in your pocket or in your accounts. I read statistics where they said that a heart transplant costs more than a million dollars, a kidney transplant costs close to a million dollars, and an eye transplant costs nearly half a million dollars. Your ear and your hearing – a million. Your eye and your eyesight – a million. You are a walking billionaire.

I used to know a man many years ago – he was a multimillionaire and he had an accident. When he used the bathroom, they had this little plastic pouch on his side where the waste would go in and he has to empty it. He has to go to the bathroom and empty that pouch. They tried to do many operations, but they were all unsuccessful. He said Wallahi if I can give all my millions and borrow millions more equivalent to them to fix this, I would do it. What is he trying to do? Why is he willing to pay millions and borrow millions more? So he can sit on the toilet. Do not look at your account for your measure and level of wealth, go look in the mirror – you are a walking billionaire. Wallahi, you are more than a multibillionaire just with Laa Ilaaha Illallah in your heart.

Be generous. In this month, be generous with that wealth Allah gave you. In Sunan at-Tirmidhi, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam gave an oath. He said:

وَاللّٰهُ مَا نَقَصَ مَالٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ

It is the same in Sahih Muslim, without the oath. Your wealth will never become less when you give it in charity. Do you believe your Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam when he speaks? He said Wallahi your wealth does not become any less than when you gave charity. If you have doubts, this is when your belief in Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam comes to a test.

The purification you get out of the charity you give is a sufficient return.

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ... التوبة:

١٠٣

Take Sadaqah (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allah for them. (Surat at-Tawbah: 103)

Your charity is a purification for your wealth, a purification for your health, a purification for your Imaan, and a purification for your deeds. If you have five hundred and you gave one hundred in charity, Wallahil-'Adheem your wealth did not become any less. Somebody might say how can you say that? I can only say Wallahi, because my beloved Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told us it is not going to become any less and I trust him, just as we all do trust him more than we trust our own selves.

Humans are prone to wanting to see their cash with their eyes – in ledgers, accounts and in their pockets. A charity you gave is means that Allah will save you from possible health ailments – maybe a mere cold you were going to get. You gave that one hundred sincerely for Allah, but you would have probably got a cold – you have to go buy medicine, days off work, you have to go to a doctor, not mentioning the agony.

...وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ... ﴿سَبَا: ٣٩﴾

And whatsoever you spend of anything (in Allah's Cause), He will replace it. (Surat Saba': 39)

Allah promised you that when you pay, you are going to be recompensed – Allah said it. You gave one hundred in charity – Wallahi your money did not become any less. It was maybe a speeding ticket you were going to get, and instead of it going on a speeding ticket and you agonising over it, it went to such a good cause. Maybe your son or your wife was going to get sick, or a tragedy or calamity was going to happen (may Allah protect you and guard you from all that). Your intention was so sincere in the one hundred for Allah, that He saved you from severe hardship. Rest assured when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam gave an oath that your wealth will not become any less, it is not going to become any less. When Allah promised that He is going to recompense, you better believe He is going to recompense. When The Generous promises to recompense, know that He is going to recompense because He is Al-Kareem (The All Generous).

Let me say, among the best charity in these blessed days and what I want to draw your attention to, is for those neglected families who have a member in prison. We have an epidemic – many brothers (Muslims) are going to prison and sisters and families left behind are getting neglected by this Ummah. A few days ago, a sister called me and her name is Umm Saleem (many of you know her). She is a Niqaabi revert with two kids, and one of her kids needs special constant supervision and attention. Her husband went to prison and to this day, Wallahi I do not even know exactly why he is in prison. It does not really actually matter to me and I do not really care – we have a Muslim sister who is a revert with no roof over her head and no food for her children. As you know, I called the brothers to collect for her twice and the brothers and sisters were very generous in

responding, especially our brothers and sisters on Twitter. May Allah reward them, I will never forget that.

Over the course of the past months, she tried to go to her local Masjid to get something to help her. The officials there told her we are not going to help you. She kept contacting them and they gave her an official response that we are not going to help you. Finally she said let me talk to the Imaam – she spoke to the Imaam a few days ago and she said why are you afraid? The media or the FBI? He said we do not care about the media, it is the FBI. She said go ask the FBI, if they say it is an issue then I can agree – if they say it is illegal then reject me. The Imaam hung up on her face. Those who let Muslims down, such as this one in such difficulties – I ask that Allah The ‘Adheem, The Haleem let them down when they so mostly need that desperate help from Allah.

We talk about tyrants in our countries, but we have those who run our Masaajid over here with an iron fist and Mubaarak, Abdullah and Ghaddaafi put together could not do what they do. This Ummah needs to revive its upbringing and thinking – revive their thinking in accordance with Tawheed. The entire way of thinking needs to change – that gutterish way of thinking needs to be refurbished by the Tawheed way of thinking.

If this woman goes back to her family or goes back to her church, she is going to get a house and food – I guarantee you that. The Jehovah’s Witnesses will give her that and more, but this pathetic Ummah abandon her and let her down. When she becomes Christian or whatever it is, who is going to be responsible before Allah? Who is going to be responsible for her and her kids sleeping hungry? This is just an example and I only mention it because I was just informed that she talked to the Imaam a few days ago, but there are many precise examples I can state of Masaajid where this goes on. These are sisters whose husbands are in prison, and whether you agree or disagree with their husbands is not even an issue. That is not what we are talking about – this has to do with families being abandoned and they are in desperate need.

She told him go and ask – if they tell you it is illegal, I can accept it and that is a sufficient response to me. She told them I do not want the Masjid in any kind of problem. I do not want anyone in any problem, but if they say okay then help me. The fear in hearts over such matters is from the devil and the devilish thinking of them. The devils are shackled, so it is their devilish thinking.

إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ... ﴿آل عمران: ١٧٥﴾

It is only Shaytaan that suggests to you the fear of his Awliyaa’ [supporters and friends (polytheists, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and in His Messenger, Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)]. (Surat Aali ‘Imraan: 175)

The Shaytaan suggests this type of fear of his Awliyaa’ (his supporters). The devils have been shackled, but there are other devils who are unfortunately running around heading Masaajid.

Among the best channels of Zakah in this Ramadhaan is to search for a family who is widowed by a husband who is in prison – she is like a widow. Try to do it yourself in your community and in your surroundings – directly between you and that family. It is such a good feeling when you go and hand them the Zakah yourself. Go to them, give them the charity and tell them this is for food. If you are afraid, tell them this is for food and rent. Wallahi you will see the affect of that charity on your life in this life, before the life after.

Why did I specify this? As always, I raise issues and awareness to unpopular and neglected matters. It is a Fardh, I have to do it. Likewise, just like this matter – Ibn Taymiyyah said the best of all obligations is to secure the release of prisoners. Pertaining to charity, I am going to say in this day and age, among the best charities is to give your Zakah to such families and to prisoners. Let me add prisoners – what do I mean? Most have not been in prison, Alhamdulillah and Inshaa Allah none of you see it. Do not think that one in prison cannot spend. They can spend and they can get necessary survival items like soup and tuna, because at times the food over there is not eatable. You would not eat it and nobody can eat it. Whether you agree with them or disagree with them, again this has nothing to do with it. We must feed the captive. During the time of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, he ordered that those who came to kill him and annihilate them be given the best of food. The Sahaabah gave them the best food they had – it was better than what they ate.

I met many in prison who were in for drugs, murder and other crimes, and they turned to Islam. When I saw how good they were, I asked them how did your Imaan get to this level? They said Shaykh we made mistakes, we lost this life and we are possibly going to die in here, so we want to go from here to Firdaws. Wallahi one of them pointed and he said I want to go from here to Firdaws.

You can walk up to your refrigerator, go to your local market or the gas station to get a little snack and come back, but your brothers behind four walls sleep with a hungry stomach.

وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ الْإِنْسَانُ : ٨

And they give food, in spite of their love for it (or for the love of Him), to Miskeen (poor), the orphan, and the captive. (Surat al-Insaan: 8)

They give food in spite of their love and need for it, for the love of Allah. They give it to the Miskeen (poor), the Yateem (orphan) and the Aseer (captive) – Allah specified it in the Qur’an. This was revealed in Makkah and at that time there were no captives – Muslims were not captives. Some of the scholars said this was talking about non-Muslim captives. If Allah told us to make sure the non-Muslim captives who came to kill and annihilate us are well fed, then imagine how it is for the believers who are held captive.

Go look up a list of prisoners and give them five, ten or twenty dollars each. That may not be significant here, but behind the walls it is. Wallahi, we would not

accept a non-believer who fought us and tried to kill us to sleep hungry. Would you accept it for one who says Laa Ilaaha Illallah Muhammadar-Rasoolullah?

The beauty of this is the secrecy of it. When I was in Madinah studying, there was a student who was one of my best friends. His family was not that rich but they sent him some amount of money every month, so we would go to the supermarket together. Over there in the local neighbourhood supermarket, there is a trust factor. You go and buy for the whole month, they record it in a notebook, and at the end of the month you go and pay it. This friend of mine used to take the money his family gave him, set it aside and not spend it on himself. He would go to the local neighbourhood market, and ask them is there anyone struggling who cannot pay and they are giving you a hard time? One time he said there was a widow and she had a few kids. It was probably a few months that she had not paid, so he took out the money and paid it. No one knew – he told the owner not to tell anybody and just to tell her the amount has been paid. Some time thereafter, we returned one time and he said the widow came to pay and he told her it has been paid. He said she stood there crying and crying and making Du'aa for the one who paid that amount.

In Sahih Muslim, a man gave a camel with a halter rope on it as charity. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said you get seven hundred camels in Jannah, with halter ropes on them – meaning they are ready. Seven hundred camels in Jannah, ready for you to ride and enjoy the scenery of Jannah.

When you are stingy in charity, you are only stingy on yourself. It is only on yourself. Look at the verse:

...وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِأَنْفُسِكُمْ... ﴿البقرة: ٢٧٢﴾

And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves. (Surat al-Baqarah: 272)
When you hold back and you are stingy in giving others, you are being stingy on yourself because Allah said:

فَلِأَنْفُسِكُمْ

It is for yourselves.

In Sahih al-Bukhari, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said one who takes care of an orphan or a widow is like a Mujaahid, or like one who prays all night long and fasts all day long. What is the difference between a widow and a woman whose husband is in prison? Allah gave a prostitute forgiveness because she took a drink of water to a dog, so imagine if you feed a hungry inmate, a hungry family or bring shelter to any of them.

Sweetness in Siyaam (Fasting)

As the middle of Ramadhaan passes, some lose the flavour and pleasure of fasting. Some already lost it, some never had it, and there is few who had it and will continue to have it until the end of Ramadhaan. May Allah allow us to be among those few. There are different types of fasting and the type of fast that we want is the fast that comes with pleasure – not just any ordinary fast. We want to attain pleasure while we are fasting, we want to attain coolness of the eyes in fasting, and we want to be ecstatic that we are fasting.

Look at the verse in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٨٣﴾

O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious). (Surat al-Baqarah: 183)

O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you. Why? To achieve Taqwa. You do not see anywhere in the verse a direct order that you need to find pleasure and coolness of the eyes in fasting. You do not see that in the verse. Why? Masses of the Ummah may not attain pleasure in fasting or Salah, but it is the exceptional few who do. We want to be among the few who do.

When Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala talks about Salah, He mentions the purpose of Salah.

...إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ... ﴿العنكبوت: ٤٥﴾

Verily, As-Salat (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahshaa' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc). (Surat al-Ankaboot: 45)

The purpose of prayer is to sway one from Fahshaa' which is major sins, and Munkar which is disbelief and polytheism (Shirk). The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said that prayer was coolness of his eyes and ultimate pleasure to him.

وَجُعِلَتْ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ

What I am trying to get at is that Allah stated in the Qur'an the purpose of fasting as Taqwa, and the purpose of Salah as deterring one from sins and disbelief. Those are purposes and characteristics everyone must achieve in those worships, over the course of time. Everyone must attain Taqwa and refrain from major sins and disbelief. That is for everyone, but there is a higher level than that for the special ones. There is an internal higher level than that – it has deep meanings and goals, and it is for the super special ones.

It is just like your faith as a whole – your faith as a whole has levels. You start off with Islam, above that is Imaan, and the third category above all those is Ihsaan. The high level of fasting is when you are enjoying and having pleasure in your fast (attaining the coolness of the eyes), because it is for the sake of Allah. Only special people get this and it is a feeling only achieved when one fasts while feeling Allah is watching over him.

الإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ

Ihsaan is to worship Allah as if you see Him.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam goes to at-Taa'if – a mountain so difficult to climb, the Sahaabah died climbing it. When he reaches to the top of the mountain, they pelt him with stones all the way down to the valley. He bleeds (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), he is tired and he is in deep agony, yet look at his amazing and stunning words.

إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ بِكَ عَلَيَّ غَضَبٌ فَلَا أُبَالِي

O Allah, if You are not mad at me, all that happened is nothing. Basically what he is saying is like ice cold water quenching the thirst of someone very thirsty. Yaa Subhan Allah, such beautiful, eloquent brightness from the brightness of revelation (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

Someone is going to say, are you trying to tell me we can have pleasure while being hungry? If it is for the sake of Allah, most definitely yes. Some seek pleasure in food and only in food, and they love that. That is a characteristic that Allah said the non-believers share with the cattle.

...وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ... ﴿١٢﴾ محمد:

﴿١٢﴾

Those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as cattle eat. (Surat Muhammad: 12)

Their lives roam around food – that is all it is about. To a believer, there are times when being hungry feels better and more satisfying than when you satisfy your hunger. Only some people can understand this – the pleasure, delight, enjoyment, thrill and aroma of fasting comes when you know you are serving Allah.

Look at the Hadith:

الصَّوْمُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ ، يَدْعُ شَهْوَتَهُ وَأَكَلَهُ وَشُرْبَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي

There are numerous Ahaadith Qudsiyyah where Allah is stressing to us that fasting is for Me – they leave this for Me. You have to understand you are doing this for Allah – in order to enjoy it, you have to understand you are doing it for Allah. That is the meaning of Imaan and Ihtisaab (the Hadith we talked about in the first Khaatirah). Not just fasting, but even the lashes of the whips and the stones that penetrate the flesh to the bones in the hot sun of Makkah – like what happened to Bilaal – become pleasurable knowing that they are for the sake of Allah.

Let me give you this example that will bring it home to you who are young, and this example is sufficient to show you the meaning of this whole Khaatirah. Someone has a wife and he goes to the store to buy her a gift. He runs from mall to mall and it is raining, it is snowing or it is in hot weather like we have today. He is trying to get the best gift possible at the best price – the one that best suits his wife. He wraps it and then he hands it to her. Of course, the same applies to a sister giving it to her husband. Then they sit back and watch them unwrap that present while they are happy, and the person who got it sits with delight and joy beyond that which words can even express, due to their extreme love and trying to please their spouse. They forgot about all the hardship. What hardship? Going shopping and walking to stores, sometimes having to work for weeks and months and years to pay for it. What made them forget about all that hardship, at the sight of their loved one opening that gift and getting happy? It is love for that person.

Another example to bring this closer to home is that of my mother, may Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala raise her rank to Firdaws and all your mothers. She used to stand on her blessed feet cooking all day (especially in days like these days in Ramadhaan), preparing the most delicious meals you could eat. Most of the time it was for family, and sometimes it would be for hundreds of guests that we used to get. As with every day, she would wake up before Fajr for Qiyaam and then stand up in and around the kitchen all day long. May Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala grant her Firdaws al-A'la for the pain she suffered and endured. Then at Maghrib after hours and hours and hours of work, we consume it within less than fifteen minutes. When she sees her husband, her daughters, her son, her grandkids and the guests eating, she gets overwhelmed with pleasure. Not once in the decades did we ever hear her say I have been standing on my feet for hours and hours preparing that meal. As she got older with that most extreme back pain that she used to have, never did she say I have been standing on my feet for hours and

hours and I am suffering. In fact, you could see the happiness on her face as she would push us to eat more. She forgot about all that suffering from when she was cooking – first and foremost for the Ajr, but after that for and because of her love to us.

That leads us to the understanding of this issue – attaining pleasure in fasting. When you give your taste buds and your stomach what it was created for (which is food and water), it feels pleasure. When you give your heart and soul what it was created for, then it will find pleasure. In order for you to feel pleasure in fasting, you need to satisfy your heart and your soul. How? You start off by asking yourself why am I fasting? To lose weight? Not going to work there. Because I have to fast? Well Inshaa Allah that is a reason Allah may accept your fast, but we aim higher than that. If you want the pleasure of fasting, you have to know you are fasting for Allah. You really have to believe that and comprehend your love for Him. You really have to let it register and sink in. Once you know that Allah loves for you to fast, you will be delighted that you are doing that which pleases Allah. If you love someone, you do that which they love and want you to do – that is the ultimate peak of showing genuine love.

Someone might say, are you saying Allah wants us to suffer? Allah wants you to be happy. What you gain in Ramadhaan of Taqwa, love and fear of Allah, Imaan and faith, regaining control over yourself and winning against fighting your desires – all that is nothing compared to what is called suffering in Ramadhaan, because in reality in Ramadhaan it is merely delaying the meals. How can it be suffering when if you go to the masses of the Muslims, they will say their favourite month is Ramadhaan. They always say Ramadhaan passed by so fast. They will say we delay our meals and we pray the night, but we cannot wait to see the next Ramadhaan.

Establish the complete Tawheed in fasting, the complete Tawheed in giving it all for the sake of Allah. We give it all for the sake of Allah and we give up everything for the sake of Allah, not just our food and water – our lives, wealth and honour. When you do that, you will feel ecstatic because you have given your heart and soul the food that they need. The more you love one, the more you want to please him and the more you seek means and avenues to try to please the one you love. On a normal occasion, dry lips and a growling stomach are annoying and at times painful, but when one knows he is serving Allah, it showers his heart with pleasure like that which the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said. As long as You are not mad at me, nothing matters.

The stomach is empty, but it gets full knowing that Allah is watching, knowing and seeing that he left desires just for His sake. One who loves Allah would not want it any other way. He endures hardship, yet he coats it with a head bowed down in humility asking Allah to accept, because if Allah accepts it then that thirst and hunger is nothing. Again, like what the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam did at at-Taa’if. The lips are dry, the throat is thirsty, but the heart gets ecstatic knowing and awaiting the day you meet Allah subhaanahu wa ta’aala.

That is the meaning of the Hadith:

وَفَرَحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ

One who fasts will be overwhelmed with happiness when he meets Allah, because of the deed of fasting.

On The Judgment Day, there will be people who are drenched in their sweat from their sins (based on their level of sins). Some will have darkened faces.

يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ... ﴿آل عمران: ١٠٦﴾

On the Day (i.e. The Day of Resurrection) when some faces will become white and some faces will become black. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 106)

Some people will be walking on their faces.

...وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمْيًا وَبُكْمًا وَصُمًّا...

﴿الإسراء: ٩٧﴾

And We shall gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf. (Surat al-Israa': 97)

Some will be blind, even though in the life before they could see.

...وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ ﴿طه: ١٢٤﴾

We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection. (Surat Taha: 124)

Then comes those who fasted – they will be excited and overwhelmed with joy when they are meeting Allah. People are in terror and misery, yet those who fasted are bragging and they cannot wait to meet Allah because the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

وَفَرَحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ

Someone who has not smelled the life of Ihsaan with Allah (which means worshipping Allah as if you see Him) may hear this, clap one hand over another in shock and say you people are crazy. I understand fasting and I will do it because I have to, but you are telling me I can enjoy it? Not many can understand that, because thirst and hunger are on one side and delight and enjoyment are on

the other side. You are combining between opposites. It is like putting two negative magnets or two positive magnets next to each other – they will not stick.

Pleasure in worship is almost like a miracle – not many understand it and not many attain it. Only those who Allah blessed with the level of Ihsaan will understand it, comprehend it and apply it. Make your intention, your purpose and your aim the right cause – for Allah, and loving and pleasing Allah. Your aim here is your weapon, so march forth with your fasting and you will see delight and pleasure in your fasting.

We reach the high levels of Jannah Inshaa Allah Ta’aala through hardships in this world. Think about that and that will change it to joy. Imagine that the hardships of this life are means to gain you the high ranks of Firdaws. We aim for the highest and our aim is never for earthly and worldly gains. Whatever price you pay of hardship in this life, is nothing in comparison to what you are going to get. It is expensive, Jannah is not cheap – it costs a lot. The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said it:

أَلَا إِنَّ سِلْعَةَ اللَّهِ غَالِيَةً

The reward of Allah is precious.

After you fix your desire to Allah and to please Allah, there are more factors to help you attain pleasure in fasting. For example, when your stomach is growling, you want that drink and you are behind the closed doors. You are alone with the food and water a hand reach away, on days like these where they have been sending out the heat wave warnings. All that is near you, you are alone and you will not touch it. You become overwhelmed with joy knowing how powerful you are over your Nafs, and knowing I have some ammunition in my Du’aa now. I can say Yaa Allah I was alone and thirsty, no one knew and no one would have stopped me. I could have stopped at the restaurant on the way to Shaykh Ahmad’s Halaqah and no one would have seen me or known – not my family or Shaykh Ahmad. O Allah, there were times when I was not that strong with my sin and I committed a sin, so grant me forgiveness. That is ammunition to the Du’aa. Yaa Allah, I was alone with water and ice – they were a hand reach away and I left it for Your sake, so grant me that interview, the job, the university, make the illness go away or whatever it may be. That is ammunition.

People will be terrorised on The Judgment Day. Hell is dragged to the land of The Judgment Day, because some people are thrown directly into it.

وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ... ﴿الفجر: ٢٣﴾

And Hell will be brought near that Day. (Surat al-Fajr: 23)

The Messenger is shouting Yaa Rabbi Sallim Sallim (يا ربي سلم سلم) and there comes Hell. In Sahih Muslim, Ibn Mas'ood radhiallahu 'anhu said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said Jahannam will be brought on that day with seventy thousand ropes, and each one has seventy thousand angels pulling it. You are going to hear the angels say Abdullah, Saalih, Jamaal. You are seventy years away from Jahannam, and then another seventy years away from Jahannam, and then another seventy years away from Jahannam. Do you know what those seventy years pushing you away from Jahannam are? Those are normal days that you fasted – every day you fasted takes you seventy years away from Jahannam. That is on a normal day and in Ramadhaan it is more. Other narrations say the distance between the sky and the earth. So seventy times thirty – they are going to push you twenty one hundred years away from Jahannam. That is just for one Ramadhaan, let alone all the extra non-obligatory fasts that you did. You are going to be thousands and thousands of years away from Jahannam. If you really contemplate it and do the Tafakkur (the Ibaadah we mentioned that is a neglected Ibaadah), tell me that does not bring joy and delight to your heart when you are fasting.

Contemplate these matters seriously and your thirst and hunger will become something you will enjoy. Tell me it does not energise your heart knowing people are crowded by Heaven, they are called to enter Jannah from the front yard of Heaven based on their deeds, and you get called to enter the door of Ar-Rayyaan (الريان). Ar-Rayyaan means the door that satisfies and quenches. You left a lot for the sake of Allah and now is the time that you are going to be satisfied – that is what Ar-Rayyaan means. When you sit and do Tafakkur in that – you contemplate it and imagine it as it is happening, tell me that does not bring joy to your Ibaadah. When you are in Jannah and people are stopping at level one, two and three, and you are going up and up, higher and higher because of your fasting, when you do Tafakkur and you imagine and analyse that, tell me that does not bring joy and coolness to your heart in fasting.

Our Spain and Ramadhaan

We spoke about many spiritual aspects of Ramadhaan and we will continue to do so Inshaa Allah Ta'aala. However, just as Ramadhaan was the month of worship, it was also the month of some of the greatest Islamic victories and some very important historical events occurred in Ramadhaan.

The victory of Badr (the one that is called the criterion in the Qur'an):

...يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ التَّقْيِ الْجَمْعَانِ... ﴿الأنفال: ٤١﴾

The Day of criterion (between right and wrong), the Day when the two forces met (The Battle of Badr). (Surat al-Anfaal: 41)

The battle that Allah honoured Islam with took place in Ramadhaan.

The conquest of all conquests (the entry to Makkah) took place in Ramadhaan.

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ﴿الفتح: ١﴾

Verily, We have given you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) a manifest victory. (Surat al-Fath: 1)

The Battle of 'Ayn Jaaloot (عين جالوت) and many other historical events took place in Ramadhaan. One of the greatest Islamic victories after the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and the Sahaabah, was a great victory that took place in Ramadhaan ninety two years after the Hijrah. It was a great victory that many Muslims do not know about (especially the young youth growing up), and many of the others who do know about it do not take pride in it.

The roots of it was during the time of Uthmaan Ibn Affaan – he attempted to conquer Qustanteeniyyah (قسطنطينية) but he was not able to. At-Tabari, Ibn Katheer and al-Humyari (historians) said when Uthmaan was not able to enter Qustanteeniyyah (which is Constantinople), he gave advice as to how it would be opened. He said it needs to be opened through the waters – you can only get there through the waters. That was the goal of many Muslim leaders and it was an honour for them to go and conquer Qustanteeniyyah. Uthmaan Ibn Affaan radhiyallahu 'anhu said whoever conquers Spain (Andalus) will be a partner in reward for whoever conquers Qustanteeniyyah. Why did he say that? Because it is the path to Qustanteeniyyah.

When the Muslims reached North Africa (by Morocco), there was a governor there in North Africa called Musa Ibn Nusayr. He was born during the time of Umar Ibn al-Khattaab radhiallahu 'anhu, and he is one of the greatest Islamic heroes. He wanted to expand and there were two directions they could go in – they could go to the desert or they could go to Andalus. They chose Andalus because they wanted to liberate people and deal with people – Muslims deal with people, not with sand. He wanted to conquer Andalus but he faced many obstacles and difficulties. First of all, the water – there was 13km of water they had to cross before they got to Andalus, and him and his army did not have ships. They were also facing the obstacle of crusaders on islands behind them. Before they got to the main enemy, there were little islands behind them and he feared they may attack them from the back if they reached Andalus. He did not have enough Muslim soldiers to face the massive crusader army, and he also had no idea about the geographic details in Andalus. However, he was determined and those obstacles and more only made him even more determined. That is when he began to build ships and he learned that from Mu'aawiyah Ibn Abi Sufyaan radhiallahu 'anhu, because he lived around him and he saw how they build ships. His father was also a close friend of Mu'aawiyah Ibn Abi Sufyaan radhiallahu 'anhu. So he began to build the ships eighty eight years after the Hijrah, which would be about 706 in the western calendar.

If you look at Musa Ibn Nusayr, his biggest accomplishment in preparing was teaching Muslims Islam (especially the new reverts). Do not minimise the structured teaching of Islam. That is the path to victory and without it many get moved by emotions, which he could have done. If you look at Noor ad-Deen and the category of Noor ad-Deen, they prepared men through knowledge and Halaqaat. Many do not know those people. Salah ad-Deen did not just wake up one day, take an army and go fight the crusaders. There was a lot of work done behind the scenes (in teaching) that many do not know about – teaching Islam, Qur'an, Tajweed, Fiqh, Usool and everything.

Musa Ibn Nusayr established intensive Islamic study (what you would call courses today) to teach the non-Arabs (Barbar Amaazeegh (بربر أمازيغ)). He wanted to teach them and he wanted Islam fully rooted in their hearts. The Barbar Amaazeegh are among the most difficult people to deal with and they are more difficult to change, but by the will of Allah and the strategy of these Halaqaat, they changed. In fact, you see the affect of that change generations after that. When the French occupied Algeria for a hundred and thirty years, they tried to get them away from their religion in every possible way they could. However, during that time and after that time, they were more firm, enthusiastic and loyal to Islam than they were before the occupation.

Musa Ibn Nusayr taught the Amaazeegh Islam – 'Aqeedah, Tawheed, Fiqh and so on through a structured curriculum. It was very easy for Musa to give a couple of fiery Khutbahs and move the masses by emotion, and they probably could have got victory like that. He could have inspired them and got victory like that, but what happens? Over time emotions fade, evaporate and change, so you do not want men led solely by emotions and that is an epidemic today. After the

structure and the foundation, then yes emotions. The Barbar who only five years ago fought Islam, were now soldiers prepared to do one of the greatest conquests in the history of Islam.

Musa Ibn Nusayr chose a general and another hero – Taariq Ibn Ziyaad – a man who died a hundred and two years after the Hijrah. Taariq Ibn Ziyaad was not even an Arab – he was a Barbar Amaazeegh. Musa Ibn Nusayr put him over other Arabs. Why? Because this Arab and non-Arab issue did not work with him. Tribalism, nationalism, secularism and racism does not work – it is Laa Ilaaha Illallah Muhammadar-Rasoolullah.

... إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ... ﴿الحجرات: ١٣﴾

Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqua [i.e. one of the Muttaqoon (pious)]. (Surat al-Hujuraat: 13)

Not only was Taariq a non-Arab, but he was a revert. He embraced Islam at the hands of Musa Ibn Nusayr and he was a revert raised by him. Over fifteen years ago, I said that legends raise legends and cowards raise cowards. That is the general rule, there are some exceptions but rules are not based on exceptions. Today you see western deluded sell outs raising their likes – western deluded sell outs produce western deluded sell outs and that is an epidemic. So legends raise legends and cowards raise cowards.

A non-Arab, a revert and an ex-slave, but according to the standards of today Taariq Ibn Ziyaad was an 'Aalim. He memorised the Qur'an at a young age and he learned Fiqh. I am not saying it based on assumption or because of what he did, I am saying this based on what history says about him. Ninety two years after the Hijrah in Ramadhaan, Taariq Ibn Ziyaad took an army of twelve thousand (some say eighteen thousand but I believe it is really twelve thousand), they crossed the waters and as soon as they landed, he gave a long eloquent speech starting off:

أيها الناس ، أين المفر ؟ البحر من ورائكم ، والعدو أمامكم ، وليس لكم والله إلا الصدق والصبر

O people, where are you going to flee to? The water is behind you, the enemy is in front of you, and all you have is to be truthful with Allah and be patient.

Some of the more recent history books say that he burned the ships in order to avoid anyone fleeing and so that they will be determined. I believe that is an exaggeration because I read the original books on al-Andalus and what happened there, and none of the early first generation books that wrote about this state

this fact. They mentioned more details than this and this is such a huge fact that is not mentioned, so I assume it did not happen.

Taariq fought many battles and the final one was on the 28th of Ramadhaan, ninety two years after the Hijrah. Nine thousand of his troops were Barbar Amaazeegh and the rest were Arab, and three thousand Muwahhideen generously irrigated the precious lands of al-Andalus with their blood. In the middle, Taariq had covenants with them and there was not a single covenant or promise that he breached, even with those he was fighting. In fact, the crusaders were forcing Jews living under their rule to turn to Christianity at the age of seven and they were confiscating their property, so to the Jews he was a hero and a liberator. If the ignorant knew the justice of Islam and the rule of Allah on this earth, they would be the first to call for it.

You would be even more amazed at how Muslims treated the Jews at the downfall, eight hundred years after this country was taken away. They went to extreme measures to preserve the lives of the Jews who were under the Muslim rule (Ahl ath-Thimmah). Compare that with when they got the upper hand. When Muslims went to lands, they went to liberate them from oppression, because Muslims are in charge of mankind. Allah put Muslims in charge of mankind.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ... ﴿آل عمران: ١١٠﴾

You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and his Sunnah (legal ways, etc)] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 110)

Never did they force anyone to say Laa Ilaaha Illallah. How dare a Muslim force anyone to say Laa Ilaaha Illallah, when we believe as a principle of Islam that his Laa Ilaaha Illallah is not accepted. Anyone who is forced, coerced or pressured – his Laa Ilaaha Illallah is not accepted.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ... ﴿البقرة: ٢٥٦﴾

There is no compulsion in religion. (Surat al-Baqarah: 256)

There are many proofs on that. Let me tell you who really forced others to embrace another religion. When a country imposes on another country to change their Islamic curriculum and take things out of their curriculum in the name of getting along with others and democracy, and those who spend billions to spread interfaith (the Kufr religion) and get people to embrace interfaith – they are the ones who are forcing people to embrace another religion.

Many battles continued beyond ninety two years after the Hijrah. In ninety three and ninety four years after the Hijrah, these battles were in Ramadhaan too. At a

point, Taariq Ibn Ziyaad and Musa Ibn Nusayr were ordered to stop their advance because of the deputy Khaleefah at the time (Sulaymaan Ibn Abdul-Malik). The Khaleefah back then was al-Waleed Ibn Abdul-Malik, but he was on his deathbed. Sulaymaan Ibn Abdul-Malik wanted them to slow their pace down so the Khaleefah can die, and the conquest will be attributed to his name. Musa Ibn Nusayr and Taariq Ibn Ziyaad did not listen to him and kept advancing. When Sulaymaan was finally the Khaleefah, he harmed and oppressed Musa Ibn Nusayr and Taariq Ibn Ziyaad very badly. They say that Musa Ibn Nusayr made up with him later on and in fact he took Musa Ibn Nusayr to Hajj, but Taariq Ibn Ziyaad lived a lonely life after the conquest.

He returned to Damascus and he lived lonely and secluded – away from the spotlight, away from politics and away from everything. What melts a heart is not only did he live a lonely life, but some books that I read said he was found dead in front of a Masjid alone, and prior to that he was spotted begging. They left him alone. Taariq Ibn Ziyaad was worthy of being the governor of Andalus, just like Amr Ibn al-‘Aas was the governor of Egypt – he conquered Egypt and he was the governor there. Taariq was worthy of being the governor in Andalus, but he was a man sincere with Allah. He did not care about the spotlight – he turned and went on his own and died alone.

The world changed after the conquest of Andalus. We saw men pop up like Ibn Khaldoun, Zahraawi, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Hazm and other scholars in geography, space, engineering, math – in every field and most importantly in every Islamic science you can imagine. It started in Spain and it affected all of Europe. A non-Muslim French writer wrote about this and he said Muslims changed the region. He mentioned a few examples and one of them that I remember was that the Muslims made a lot of Europe civilised. He said women in the northern part of Europe (they were called Saqaalibah (صقالبة)) used to cut their hands and faces with knives and harm themselves when they were widowed. Some of them went to an extreme of hanging themselves when they were widowed, to show their love for their husbands. They would then burn the husband and the wife and bury them in the same grave. When they saw how Muslims dealt with matters like this, they changed.

Islam went to liberate, to remove oppression and to make them humans. This French man writes that there was an area where they did not take a shower but once or twice a year. It was a ritual or a belief, I cannot remember what he said. When they saw the Muslims making Wudhoo’ five times a day and bathing regularly, it changed them. They taught them how to clean, how to deal with one another, and they taught them about mercy. It is amazing to read that Muslims installed streetlights back then. It is amazing to read that Muslims decorated the main avenues of Andalus with flowers and trees. It came to a peak when Abdur-Rahmaan an-Naasir took leadership. He became very popular and strong, and he had an effect on everyone. In fact, in 1961 on the one thousandth anniversary of his death, the non-Muslims celebrated his achievements and accomplishments that overwhelmed the whole region, in honour and respect to him. Many Muslims would not even know who this guy is. What is sad is that our bright

Ummah's legacy has been forgotten, and that brings about a defeatist mentality and surrenderist cowards.

In Qurtubah (قرطبة) there was a library and it was the biggest in the world – it had half a million books in it and they did not have copy machines and printers back then. If there was a library bigger than that, it would have been the one in Iraq – the one also owned by Muslims and under the rule of Muslims in Baghdad. It is the one where the Tartar took the books and poured them in the ocean of Dijlah (دجلة), to the point that it changed the colour of Dijlah. There was also Daar al-Hikmah in al-Qaahirah (القاهرة) – another huge library. Those were the only three major ones back then, but the one in Qaahirah died in history.

When the crusaders entered Andalus, one of the first things they did was burn the books. When they conquered Andalus, a bishop with his hatred to Islam took eighty thousand books to the public square of Qurtubah and burned them all in one day. Then in 646 after the Hijrah, they burned the rest of the books for the Muslims. Why? Because they knew affirmatively that this is what uplifts this Ummah – knowledge and mainly we are talking about the knowledge of the Sharee'ah and the sciences of Islam. As long as they have this knowledge, this Ummah will remain strong. They wanted to or they thought that they can take the Ummah away from this knowledge and away from its roots by burning their books. Little did they know the outline for the Ummah is in our hearts, and that they can never get to. It is not in ink and paper, it is in our hearts.

As time went by, the Muslims began to go astray. They went astray from the teachings that Allah gave them victory for. From competing over memorising the Qur'an, Bukhari and Muslim, and competing over knowledge, it was now competing over girls. From filling the houses of Allah and the Halaqaat, to now spider webs on the houses of Allah and the Halaqaat, and clubs being livened up. Now there was a generation that had a deficiency in Tawheed, Walaa' and Baraa', Fiqh and Islamic sciences, which divided the Islamic Ummah in Andalus to twenty two kings – just like the Muslim world today. I think today there is twenty two, so it is the same thing.

One of the leaders Ibn al-Ahmar was a king in Andalus and he brought non-Muslims to fight his opponent – his Muslim brother in Islam called Ibn Hud. In return, Ibn Hud gave those non-Muslims thirty of his strongholds to side with him against Ibn al-Ahmar. The final king of Spain (Abu Abdullah as-Sagheer) once blocked a Muslim army that was heading to the territory of Maalqah (مالقة), to help Muslims there that were besieged by the crusaders. When the crusaders defeated the Muslims (because he blocked the army going to help the Muslims), they changed a Masjid into a church. Abu Abdullah as-Sagheer sent them a letter congratulating them on the victory. He thought he was scoring points with them and they promised him, so he thought they were going to keep him in power. He

thought that is how victory and honour is achieved, and that is the disease of the hearts.

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ
تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ... ﴿المائدة: ٥٢﴾

And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy), they hurry to their friendship, saying: "We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us." (Surat al-Maa'idah: 52)

He sought victory by putting his faith in the hands of the enemy, over his brothers. He did get temporary victory, but when you seek honour in other than Allah, your end is definite humiliation. Right after they used him and made him think he is going to remain in power, they turned on him and took over his territory. Abu Abdullah as-Sagheer (the last king in Spain) surrendered the final stronghold in Ghurnaatah (غرناطة) (Granada). He gave it to the crusaders, then he walked in on his mother crying and his mother told him the famous quote:

أبكي مثل النساء ملكا لم تحافظ عليه مثل الرجال

Cry on a kingdom you did not save like a man.

Andalus is occupied territory just like Falasteen is occupied territory. Abul-Baqaa' ar-Rundi the famous poet from Andalus spoke about Andalus in a long poem. He spoke about how Andalus was – the knowledge there, the beauty of it and how the whole world used to go there to learn. He wrote about how the massacre of the crusaders was, how the traitors of the Ummah were, how Muslims neglected each other and how the young beautiful girls were raped by the crusaders. Then finally, at the end of the poem he says:

لمثل هذا يذوب القلب من كمد إن كان في القلب إسلام وإيمان

The heart melts with sorrow at such [sights], if there is any Islam or belief in that heart!

That which Allah gave them victory with ninety two years after the Hijrah (which was their holding and clinging on to the rope of Allah), when they left it they were defeated in the month of Ramadhaan as well.

I'tikaaf

Let us talk about some of the Fiqh points that I was asked about and they are really the top questions that I got on this matter.

DOES ONE HAVE TO DO ALL TEN DAYS?

He can do a portion of them. Let us say he has a job, he goes for five days and then suddenly they call him to work. He will get the five days of reward Inshaa Allah and then when he finishes what he has to do, he comes back and initiates the Niyyah for a new I'tikaaf. The best is to do all ten days but if one does a few days or even if it is as short as five minutes, that is acceptable.

Ash-Shaafi'ee said on this matter you are your own Ameer (leader), it is what you choose. You can continue or you can leave it whenever you want, there is no sin in it. In Fath Al-Baari, Ibn Hajr said as long as one did not do a Nathr (نذر) (meaning a vow), he can break his I'tikaaf and resume if he wishes. What we mean by a vow is if someone says O Allah if you grant me this, I am going to do ten days of I'tikaaf or three days of I'tikaaf. If he does that vow, the vow becomes a Fardh upon him and he must do it as he says.

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM DURATION OF I'TIKAAF?

The Hanaabilah said it is a portion of a day (a portion of a day is sufficient). The Hanafiyyah said any time is sufficient. The Shaafi'iyyah said the length of the duration that one spends in Rukoo'. The one, two or three minutes that you spend in Rukoo' is sufficient a time for I'tikaaf. Once you enter the Masjid with the Niyyah of I'tikaaf, that is I'tikaaf. It could be for three minutes, for one day, for two days or for a month. The ones that limited were the Maalikiyyah who limited it for a day and a night, but really it is what the three Imaams indicated (that there is no time limit and it could be any minimum amount of time you spend in a Masjid).

When I was a child we used to go to the Masjid of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. I used to memorise the Qur'an and that is where I memorised the Qur'an. We used to go there every single night for four and a half years, from 'Asr until Isha'. I remember we did not miss a single day except one day when the Masjid flooded, because back then they did accommodate well for when it rained severely. When we would go into the Masjid from 'Asr to Isha', my father would always remind me and say when you enter the Masjid have the intention in your heart to do I'tikaaf. If you go in a Masjid from Maghrib to Isha' and you make the intention of I'tikaaf, you get the Ajr (reward) of it. Two people can enter the same

Masjid at the same time and leave at the same time, one of them gets the reward of I'tikaaf and one does not. That is because one of them had the intention of I'tikaaf and the other did not.

However, to reap the full benefits of I'tikaaf that is when you go in seclusion and you sever yourself from the world. You leave your cell phone and everything behind you. You sever yourself from the worldly matters, unless there is something important. There is no problem with communicating in matters that are important.

From a Fiqh point of view, I'tikaaf is Sunnah. It is Sunnah and just like many think Taraweeh is only Sunnah throughout Ramadhaan, Taraweeh, Qiyaam and I'tikaaf are Sunnah throughout the year.

I'TIKAAF MUST BE IN A MASJID

Some say well if you want me to be alone, I will do I'tikaaf in my house by myself. For it to be I'tikaaf it has to be in a Masjid, that is a condition of it. The wives of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did I'tikaaf in the Masjid. Had it been permitted to do so in their houses, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa salam would have directed them to that.

Allah said:

وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٧﴾

And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I'tikaaf (i.e. confining oneself in a mosque for prayers and invocations leaving the worldly activities) in the mosques. (Surat al-Baqarah: 187)

And He said:

...وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنْ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ
وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿البقرة: ١٢٥﴾

And We commanded Ibraheem and Isma'eel that they should purify My House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I'tikaaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer). (Surat al-Baqarah: 125)

Also, the I'tikaaf of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was in the Masjid. I'tikaaf in a house is not permissible, not even for a woman. You can worship in

your house but it is not I'tikaaf and it is not called I'tikaaf. In the fifteenth volume of his Fataawa, Ibn Taymiyyah said I'tikaaf for women is in the Masjid and they should stay away from the house.

SOME OF THE ETIQUETTES OF I'TIKAAF

Some of the etiquettes of I'tikaaf that one should know is that one should remain in the Masjid and not leave, unless it is an essential matter like using the bathroom. It is better to remain in the Masjid during I'tikaaf than to follow a Janaazah and you know how much reward there is in following a Janaazah (Qiraat of reward). It is better to remain in the Masjid than to visit someone who is ill. It is better to remain in the Masjid during I'tikaaf than to have relationship with a wife. Notice how these matters are encouraged and they have so much reward to them, but when you are doing I'tikaaf you are better off staying in the Masjid.

One can leave for essential matters like using the bathroom, taking a shower, getting clothes or maybe getting food and drink unless someone brings it. He should go bring the food and eat it in the Masjid. Do not go eat in a restaurant or at home, unless you are unable to do so in the Masjid. One can speak to and talk to his family or visitors as the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did with Safiyyah. If you bring your cell phone, make sure you only use it for essential matters. Especially the sisters, they may need it to remain in contact with their families but keep it for only essential matters.

WHAT INVALIDATES I'TIKAAF?

One being an apostate (Nas'alullah as-Salaamah), women on their days, sexual relationship and leaving the Masjid for no need.

وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٧﴾

And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I'tikaaf (i.e. confining oneself in a mosque for prayers and invocations leaving the worldly activities) in the mosques. (Surat al-Baqarah: 187)

WHEN SHOULD ONE ENTER THE MASJID?

The formal timing of entering the Masjid is what Imaam Maalik, Anas and Sufyaan said, that you go at the Maghrib of the twentieth day and you leave at the Maghrib of the final day of Ramadhan.

THE RULES OF I'TIKAAF

One must be a Muslim, it must be in a Masjid and you must have the intention of I'tikaaf. Women need the permission of their husband or Wali to do I'tikaaf, especially the permission of their husband (it is more essential). Just like she needs his permission to do the Sunnah of Siyaam, she needs his permission to do I'tikaaf because both are Sunnah.

I'TIKAAF FOR WOMEN

Many sisters say well we heard that there is no I'tikaaf for women. No, it is Sunnah for women to do I'tikaaf just like men. It is permissible for them, it is reward and if they can do it they should do it if there is no Fitnah. Some Masaajid, you hear about stuff that they do in I'tikaaf, I say it is Haraam for them to do I'tikaaf.

Allah said:

...وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٧﴾

While you are in I'tikaaf (i.e. confining oneself in a mosque for prayers and invocations leaving the worldly activities) in the mosques. (Surat al-Baqarah: 187)

It is for men and woman as long as there is no Fitnah. In Sahih al-Bukhari, Aishah radhiallahu 'anha said that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam allowed her and Hafsah to perform I'tikaaf.

There was one time that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam saw many tents in the Masjid. Note, they built tents for the women to stay in privacy and not to go mix and mingle. He ordered them to be taken down, he cancelled I'tikaaf himself and he made up for it the following month. Notice he ordered that they be taken down and he cancelled it himself. Why did he do that? There is a reason behind that. Some of the 'Ulamaa said they were ordered to take them down because he disliked them to do I'tikaaf, because he may have sensed jealousy and competition. They wanted to be close to him, there is a jealousy factor and they are there near him, which defeats the purpose of I'tikaaf. The purpose of I'tikaaf is to get away from everything as much as possible and now they are near him, so it may have been a distraction. That is one opinion.

Other 'Ulamaa said it was not to deter women from I'tikaaf, but rather because there were so many tents in the Masjid that there was not sufficient space for the men to do their obligatory matters. We have a clear, solid, authentic Hadith

where the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam permitted Aishah and Hafsaah to do I’tikaaf and that is what stands.
In fact, more decisive and more direct than that is what is in Bukhari and Muslim:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَغْتَكِفُ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ
رَمَضَانَ حَتَّى تَوَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اغْتَكَفَ أَزْوَاجُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ

The Hadith by ‘Urwah. This is after the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam died and ‘Urwah says that the wives of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam did I’tikaaf after him. That is the overwhelming opinion of the great, vast majority of the ‘Ulamaa and of the Madhaahib, that a woman is like a man in I’tikaaf. Make sure you have permission and also that there is no Fitnah.

The Final Ten Days of Ramadhaan

The Jannah continues to decorate itself for us. The mercy of Allah continues to descend upon us and it is important for one to snap out of it, to wake up and to take off. It is from the mercy of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala that He made the best days of Ramadhaan the final ten days. These are days you take from your physical rest to nourish your spiritual needs. You take from your physical rest to give your spirit its rest.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded from the saying of Aishah radhiallahu 'anha that during the last ten days of Ramadhaan, the Messenger of Allah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam would wake up his wives during the night. Wake them up to cook or for his needs? Wake them up and then he would be fully busy in acts of worship, so they can worship as well. In a narration in Muslim, he would strive to do acts of worship during the final ten days of Ramadhaan more than he would do in any other days throughout the year. In Bukhari Aishah radhiallahu 'anha said with the start of the last ten days of Ramadhaan, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam used to tighten his waist and pray all night long and he used to keep his family awake for prayer. Tightening his waist is indicative that someone is in hot pursuit and about to take off. He is tightening his waist so he can sprint and take off. Take off in what? Take off in Ibaadah.

Some other 'Ulamaa said that it is symbolic to mean that he no longer had relationship with his wives. He did not go near them in the final ten days, he was occupied in Ibaadah and he did not have time. That was the opinion of Sufyaan ath-Thawri and it is the more correct opinion because of the other narration where they described the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam:

وطوى فراشه واعتزل النساء

That the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam folded his mattress and stayed away from relationship with his wives. We are not saying it is Haraam but he was so occupied in the final ten days that he did not even have relationship with his wives in those nights.

Ibn Rajab Rahimahullah said that he used to do what is permissible with his wives in the twenty nights of Ramadhaan. In the final ten nights, he would be so determined and so focused in worship that he would not even have relationship

with them. If this is the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, the most fearful to Allah as we always say, the one whose prior, present and future sins are forgiven and the most beloved to Allah then what should we say who are not guaranteed that their sins are forgiven? We should imitate him and it would be unjust not to imitate him. It is betrayal to one’s self not to imitate the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam in these matters, as best as one can do. It is betrayal to one’s self not to take advantage of such a season. If one keeps delaying without taking advantage of such days, then tell me what days are you going to take advantage of? When you are in the grave and when it is too late?

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali said the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam used to do in the final ten days that which he never did throughout the entire year (as the Hadith stated). What did he do? He used to pray at night, he used to make Dhikr and read Qur’an. Do any form of worship you are comfortable with and that you feel brings you closer to Allah. Dhikr? Do Dhikr. Reciting Qur’an? Recite Qur’an. Prayer and Qur’an? Do that. A lot of people ask what is the best thing to do? Allah gave so many forms of worship because He knows the nature of humans. Some matters may be appealing to some and not appealing to others. For example the Rak’aat are different, you have two, three and four Rak’aat, some are silent and some are loud. For some Ibaadaat you need to do Ibaadaat in other Ibaadaat and some are independent. So what is the best thing to do? It is what you are most comfortable with and that which brings you and strengthens your attachment with Allah.

There are some special Du’aa for the night of Laylat al-Qadar and we will talk about that in an independent talk. Also, you wake up your family in these nights and it is Sunnah. That is a specialty of the last ten nights. Sufyaan ath-Thawri said when the last nights enter, one should wake up his family to join him in prayer or so they can make their own Salah. You get reward just for doing that. What else do you do? Your pursue the night of Laylat al-Qadar and we will give an independent talk on that Inshaa Allah.

You also do I’tikaaf in these nights. (Click [here](#) for matters pertaining to the Fiqh of I’tikaaf).

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَعْتَكِفُ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ

Ibn Battaal said the Ahaadith show that it is Sunnah to do I’tikaaf in Ramadhaan and it is also outside of Ramadhaan. This is one of the abandoned Sunnahs and the more you do a Sunnah that is abandoned, the more reward you get because you are reviving a Sunnah, as we mentioned about some of the abandoned Ibaadaat. Ibn Mundhir and Shihaab said it is astonishing that the Muslims have left I’tikaaf when the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam never left I’tikaaf from the time he came to Madinah until the time Allah took his soul. It is also narrated

by Abu Hurayrah and Aishah that the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam did I’tikaaf every year until he died. He did I’tikaaf in the first ten days of Ramadhan, then he did I’tikaaf in the second ten days of Ramadhan and then he did I’tikaaf in the final ten days of Ramadhan and he remained doing it in the final ten days. That is the Sunnah of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam until his death. In fact, it was such an important thing to the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam in Ramadhan that when he missed it, he made up for it in the first ten days of Shawwaal the following month. The year he died he did twenty years of I’tikaaf sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Ibn Hajr said that is because the year before that he had missed an I’tikaaf because he was travelling, so he made up for it in the next year. He used to do I’tikaaf in pursuit of the night of Laylat al-Qadar.

I’tikaaf is to seclude yourself from everything and everyone to connect with Allah. You need to connect with Allah. The more one learns about Allah and loves and yearns to Allah, the more he loves to be secluded with Allah. One of the Salaf who used to spend plenty of time in seclusion in his house was asked do you not get lonely at home? He said how can I feel lonely when I continue in remembrance of the One who remembers me. It is a contact, it is a communication and it is a bond. Your relationship with Allah has a direct connection that roams around the heart and I’tikaaf is purification for that heart. Fasting is protection from eating, drinking and relationship. I’tikaaf is protection from excessive talk and excessive sleep and it is getting away from friends, family and other matters that distract you even slightly. Distract you from what? From the complete obedience and connection with Allah. I’tikaaf is to put the entire world behind your back so you can sprint forth to Allah.

Today they go to Masaajid to do I’tikaaf and defeat the purpose of I’tikaaf. They go there to hang out and talk and that defeats the purpose of I’tikaaf. You are getting away from your family so you will not talk to them and you will not have any worldly connections. You leave worldly matters behind your back, matters that are distracting you from holding yourself accountable and matters that have been holding you down from Allah. I’tikaaf is to strip you from as much ties of all worldly matters and to turn to Allah for a period of time in the best of all spots (in the Masaajid of Allah).

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ
وَالْآصَالِ ﴿النور: ٣٦﴾

In houses (mosques), which Allah has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honoured), in them His Name is glorified in the mornings and in the afternoons or the evenings. (Surat an-Noor: 36)

Imaam Ahmad specifically said it is best for the believers to stay away from mixing with people, even if it is to teach and even if it is to advise. Remain alone, connect with Allah and retreat to yourself. You find those who were in jail and especially those who did solitary confinement in prison, and the best of their

times was spending time in seclusion in cells with their communication between them and Allah. Truly communicating with Allah in seclusion has such a pleasure that nothing can compare to it. One who loves another loves to be alone with them, that is a fact. One who truly loves Allah needs that time alone with Allah. That is how you ask yourself do you really love Allah? I'tikaaf is a training session for the heart to turn completely to Allah. I'tikaaf is severing all contact with creation to establish contact with Allah.

Take advantage of these nights. You remember when we mentioned some of the Salaf? When they were in their youth they would say we are like horses trying to sprint in worship to get to the finish line. They said that in their youth and not in their final days. Now it is time to get ready for the final ten days of Ramadhaan. You have to sprint in them. Sprint in Salah, sprint in praise and glorification, in Qur'an, in charity and in any worship that comes to your mind that is from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. These final nights are pregnant with a night better than a thousand nights (the night the Qur'an was revealed in). You take time out of your comfort and out of your sleep, overcome laziness and stand up on your feet in humility. Lift up your spirit, bury your sluggishness and compete with the Sahaabah so that when we meet them in Jannah Inshaa Allah they will know they left behind the men who were in worship like they were (the monks of the nights). Do not let these final ten days be like the first twenty days. You do not let Ramadhaan be like your ordinary days and you do not let the final ten days be like the first twenty days, you excel in Ibaadah.

Most of the month is gone, no one knows if you will live until next Ramadhaan or whether you will be in a dark hole surrounded by dirt from your left and your right, from on top of you and from below you. Two thirds is almost gone and it left at a lightning speed, and that is how your life is going to pass. Both the righteous and the bad regret days they missed out on. The righteous regret that they did not do more and the evil regret that they did not turn to Allah in these times. Sprint in your Ibaadah to Allah and He will sprint to you.

The Night of Destiny (Laylat Al-Qadar)

Yesterday I covered the main aspects of the last ten nights of Ramadhan and I purposely left out the details of one of the most significant matters, which is the Night of Destiny (Laylat al-Qadar). I wanted to single it out in a talk because it is something that needs to be addressed before the ten nights, because you have to prepare for it.

You have had many opportunities in Ramadhan and this is one of your final shots at it. As we mentioned in the first Khaatirah:

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

This is the final shot at it, the Night of Destiny (Laylat al-Qadar).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LAYLAT AL-QADAR

An entire Surah with five verses was revealed about it and it was named after it, and then if you go to the beginning of Surat ad-Dukhaan you have approximately four to six verses in that Surah speaking about Laylat al-Qadar. So you have nearly eleven verses in the Qur'an and an entire Surah talking about that one night, the Night of Destiny (Laylat al-Qadar).

It is not any ordinary night, it is a night the Qur'an was revealed in.

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴿القدر: ١﴾

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the night of Al-Qadar (Decree). (Surat al-Qadar: 1)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ... الدخان: ٣ ﴿الدخان: ٣﴾

We sent it (this Qur'an) down on a blessed night [(i.e. night of Qadar) in the month of Ramadhan, the 9th month of the Islamic calendar]. (Surat ad-Dukhaan: 3)

Now why was it called Laylat al-Qadar? For one of two reasons or for both reasons together. It goes back to the root word of Qadar (قدر), which in Arabic means the value and importance. The Night of Destiny (Laylat al-Qadar) is deeply valued and we are going to speak about its value Inshaa Allah. The second reason is Qadar comes from destiny, it means your destiny is written in this night.

Someone will say stop here, you are confusing me. One minute you tell me it was written fifty thousand years before the sky and the Earth was created and now you are telling me it is written in the Night of Destiny (Laylat al-Qadar)? Make up your mind. Well here is how it goes, it was written in the fifty thousand years before the sky and the Earth was created and now on this specific night the tasks of that year are given to the angels.

فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ﴿الدُّخَانُ: ٤﴾

Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments. (Surat ad-Dukhaan: 4)

The tasks for the entire year are given to the angels. So and so is going to die, so and so is going to be prosperous and so and so is going to become poor. The tasks for that entire year, so there is no time to sleep on a day that your provision is written. Your matters are given to the angels to carry out the tasks (both good and bad) on this night, so turn to Allah in mercy. Some people are going to be dead men walking on this night.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ﴿الْقَدَرُ: ٢﴾

And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadar (Decree) is? (Surat al-Qadar: 2)

If I were to buy something valuable and you come to me and ask me for it, I tell you do you even know how much that cost? Immediately it is embedded in your mind that it is a very, very high price and such a high figure beyond that which is normal and comprehensible. Allah tells you do you even know what Laylat al-Qadar is? Do you even know what you are going to get out of Laylat al-Qadar?

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴿الْقَدَرُ: ٣﴾

The night of Al-Qadar (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allah in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months (i.e. 83 years and 4 months)). (Surat al-Qadar: 3)

That is your night brothers and sisters. If you are asked what is your night, you say it is Laylat al-Qadar. Some people say their night is the wedding night, the

graduation night or the night their child was born on. It is good stuff and not bad, however how many say their night is the night that the burden of sins was lifted off their backs? Wallahi it should be the happiest night of your life. The night you spend a few hours in worship with Allah, yet you get 83.33 years worth of reward. Your Allahu Akbar, your Subhan Allah and your Alhamdulillah is as if you said it non-stop for a thousand months. Your recitation and repentance is as if you did it non-stop for 83.33 years. Your standing before Him is as if you did it for thirty thousand days. Do you know what Laylat al-Qadar is?

Tell me by Allah, has he not been cheated who misses out on the blessings of this night? Has he not wronged and oppressed himself, he who spends it in vain or in prohibited gatherings and settings? Abandon that comfortable sleep. Do not recline to laziness, especially on this night. Fix your feet firm to your Lord in humility and get those 83.33 years worth of reward. It is not something anyone with his right mind misses out on.

تَنْزِلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ﴿٤﴾ الْقَدَرُ: ٤

Therein descend the angels and the Rooh [Jibreel] by Allah's Permission with all Decrees. (Surat al-Qadar: 4)

In the authentic Hadith in Sahih al-Jaami' and others, the angels descend more than the numbers of stones on this Earth and Jibreel comes down with them. How beautiful, have you imagined that? That explains the peace of that night. Jibreel the angel who stopped coming down when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam died, now it is a super special occasion so he comes down. The angels love the best, especially in worship. They are worshippers who never disobey Allah.

... لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ التَّحْرِيمُ: ٦

Who disobey not, (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded. (Surat at-Tahreem: 6)

They have al-Bayt al-Ma'moor up there to worship by. Their nights and days are in worship but they come to this Earth on that night. They would rather be worshipping on the Earth in this night, due to the value and significance of that night on this Earth. The angels make the journey to come to this Earth and leave the heavens for this night, and some escape the opportunity and take a journey into the darkness of sins.

سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ﴿٥﴾ الْقَدَرُ: ٥

Peace! (All that night, there is Peace and Goodness from Allah to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn. (Surat al-Qadar: 5)

THE SIGNS OF LAYLAT AL-QADAR

Peace is that night and it is a sign of that night. There are many authentic Hadith and there are many non authentic Hadith many mention, and we will mention some of them. Some of the signs appear during the night itself and others occur the following morning, and what is authentic on that is what Imaam Muslim reported by Abu Hurayrah radhiyallahu 'anhu. He said we were talking about Laylat al-Qadar and when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam heard them, he said anyone amongst you remembers the night when the moon arose and it was like a piece of plate (a waning moon like half of a plate). That is the first one and then there are other Ahaadith.

Abu Dawood at-Tayaalisi, al-Bazzaar and Musnad Ahmad reported from 'Ubaadah Ibn as-Saamit that he said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said Laylat al-Qadar is a clear and shining night as if there were a bright moon in it. Look at that, pay attention to the wording. A bright night and notice how he said as if it was a bright moon. The brightness of that night is Noor Allah put in it and from the angels coming down, as if it was a bright moon. It is not from the moon, the brightness is from something else (the angels going up and down and the brightness Allah put in it). The Hadith also goes on to say it is a calm and tranquil night, it is neither cold nor hot and nor are any shooting stars thrown in it (in that morning). Those are some of the signs of Laylat al-Qadar.

Some scholars said the winds will be settled in it, others said one may see a dream about it, some said they might see an exceptional sweetness during their worship and Salah in that night and those are the opinions of some legitimate scholars. Some say the dogs do not bark in it but that is not correct at all, there is no proof on that and that is false.

Those are some of the signs on that night, now what is after that? The following morning the sun appears white and without rays (beamless). According to Ibn Hajr and others, it is possible to pinpoint the exact night by those signs. At-Tabari and Ibn al-'Arabi said that everyone gets reward of that night even if they cannot pinpoint the exact night. You get the reward even if you do not know it. Some including Ibn Hajr mentioned that you need to see a sign to get the full reward, otherwise you get the reward of a normal day. Only those who see the sign will get the reward of a thousand months according to this opinion. That is the weaker of the two opinions and that is a very weak opinion. Anyone who worships Allah and it turns out to be that night (whether he saw the signs or not), Inshaa Allah Ta'aala he is going to get the full reward.

As-Subki and others suggested that if one knows it (if he sees the sign), he should not tell anyone because that is like a Karaamah (somewhat of a miracle) to that believer and it should be kept secret. Why? To avoid Riyaa' (show off) and envy as in the verse in Surat Yusuf:

قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تَقْصُصْ رُؤْيَاكَ عَلَىٰ إِخْوَتِكَ فَيَكِيدُوا لَكَ كَيْدًا ۖ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿يوسف: ٥﴾

He (the father) said: "O my son! Relate not your vision to your brothers, lest they arrange a plot against you. Verily! Shaytaan is to man an open enemy!" (Surat Yusuf: 5)

When Yusuf saw the nice dream, Ya'qoob did not want him to say that dream to them. Another reason is so it will not occupy your time. You run around telling people I saw this and that sign and I am sure it is this night, but instead you should occupy yourself in Ibaadah.

THE PRECISE NIGHT OF LAYLAT AL-QADAR IS UNKNOWN

Now the question everyone asks about this every year is about the famous Hadith when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam went out to tell the Sahaabah. He was going to tell them the precise night but then he saw two quarreling and he forgot. He said I came to tell you and I forgot, that is the mercy of Allah and the mercy of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam that we do not know. It is from the mercy of Allah that He made His Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam forget it and not tell us. How is it mercy? Yes it is mercy. Had we known it I would be the first one to neglect all of Ramadhaan, wait for that night, do a little bit of Ibaadah and then go back to sleep. But he said it is one of the ten nights so you can gain much reward out of those ten nights, and then it narrowed down to one of the odd nights of those ten nights. Assume with me it is one of the three hundred and sixty five nights, it is still worth seeking it. If he said it is one out of the three hundred and sixty five nights, it is worth seeking it in every one of those three hundred and sixty five nights because you are getting thirty thousand days worth out of anything you do in it.

Pay attention to this example. If I say I am going to write a date on a piece of paper (one day out of the days of 2012), I am going to hide it and if you give me a dollar on that day I wrote and hid you get in return from me thirty thousand dollars, a wise person with less than an average mental capacity would get three hundred and sixty five together, set them aside and give me the dollar every day. That way he is going to be guaranteed not to miss out on that great bargain. The worst case scenario is that he loses a few hundred, but what is he going to gain for sure? Thirty thousand dollars. That is Laylat al-Qadar, work one night out of five nights and you get thirty thousand nights worth. Allah was merciful when He narrowed it down for us, He could have said it is one out of the three hundred and sixty five days of the year and it would be worth pursuing. He did not even narrow it down to the month of Ramadhaan, but He narrowed it down to the ten nights for us and the odd nights of the ten nights (which is only five days) according to the most popular opinion by the 'Ulamaa.

Then you get someone who says which one of those five nights is it? Now that is getting too stingy with Allah. Work in worship. That Laylat al-Qadar may be the determining night. It may be something you did on it that pleases you when you stand naked and uncircumcised before the scale on the Judgment Day (the Day of Terror). It may be what pleases you when you stand before Allah the Creator of the Universe and the Creator of the Heaven and Hell. It may be one thing you did on that night that pleases you in that stand.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١﴾ يَوْمَ تَرُوءُنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢﴾ ﴿الحج﴾

O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgment) is a terrible thing. The Day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her nursling, and every pregnant one will drop her load, and you shall see mankind as in a drunken state, yet they will not be drunken, but severe will be the Torment of Allah. (Surat al-Hajj: 1-2)

Do not be stingy with Allah. It may that immense reward you do on that night that gets you the success you are awaiting. It may be that night that gets you your book in your right hand and you run to your family saying:

...هَاؤُمُ اقْرَءُوا كِتَابِيَهٗ ﴿الحاقة: ١٩﴾

“Take, read my Record!” (Surat al-Haaqqah: 19)

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR LAYLAT AL-QADAR

Now let us get more practical. You are going to say okay you convinced me, now what do I do?

When you are on pursuit of Laylat al-Qadar, you do everything we mentioned in the previous Khawaatir. You do Salah, Ibaadah, Qur’an, Dhikr and everything you know of but this one has a specific authentic Du’aa to it. When you are pursuing the night of Laylat al-Qadar you should say it and say it more so in the final ten nights as much as you can because it could be one of the final ten nights (more narrowed down to the odd nights).

عَائِشَةُ أُمُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ
وَأَفَقْتُ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ ، مَا أَقُولُ ؟ قَالَ قُولِي : اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ
الْعَفْوَ ، فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

O Allah You are the Pardoner who likes to pardon, so pardon me.

Pardon ('Afuw), it is not Ghafoor. Why not Ghafoor? Ghafoor and 'Afuw mean to forgive but why 'Afuw? Literally speaking, 'Afuw means to erase and all the Arabs used to say:

عفت آثار القوم

When the traces of the footsteps in the desert would be gone, they would say that meaning it is erased and this is going to help explain it.

What is the difference between the two? The 'Ulamaa have given many differences. Some say forgiveness ('Afuw) is for leaving obligations and the forgiveness of Ghafoor is for doing the Haraam. That is an opinion. It gets deeper than that, some said Maghfirah (مغفرة) of Allah (Ghafoor) is forgiving you, yet it is still written and you are going to be asked about it on the Judgment Day. You are forgiven, but it is not erased until the Judgment Day and then it will be erased. That is taken somewhat from a Hadith in Bukhari where Allah brings someone closer and closer, He says do you remember this sin and that sin and he admits to all the sins and then Allah says to Him:

إِنِّي سَتَرْتُ عَلَيْكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا ، فَأَنَا أَغْفِرُهَا لَكَ الْيَوْمَ

I covered it in the life before and then I forgive it.

They say this is the Maghfirah, so what is the 'Afuw? It is a higher status than that and that is what we are aiming for. It is when Allah forgives you and erases it totally, so it is not even going to be brought up on the Judgment Day. 'Afuw is when Allah forgives, erases and gets you and the angels to forget about it on the Judgment Day so you will not be embarrassed. 'Afuw is when He is pleased with you, pleased that after the sin you went deep in sincere repentance.

'Afuw comes many times in the Qur'an and five of those times it comes combined with the All Powerful. He is able to punish but He pardons you.

إِنْ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا

﴿النساء: ١٤٩﴾

Whether you (mankind) disclose (by good words of thanks) a good deed (done to you in the form of a favour by someone), or conceal it, or pardon an evil, verily, Allah is Ever Oft Pardoning, All Powerful. (Surat an-Nisaa': 149)

'Afuw and Ghafoor come combined in the Qur'an and it is possibly to show that you can choose Maghfirah and Allah will forgive you, but you can go a step further and try harder and get the 'Afuw where it will be fully erased. Whatever way you look at it, it seems that 'Afuw is an exaggerated form of Ghufraan (غفران) with more rewards to it. It is a higher status and a higher honour of forgiveness. From my personal humble observation when I read the Qur'an, I notice that when Allah forgives the real super major sins or tells people to forgive, He mentions 'Afuw. For example, when the people of Musa worshipped the cow:

وَإِذْ وَاَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ

ظَالِمُونَ ﴿البقرة: ٥١﴾

And (remember) when We appointed for Musa forty nights, and (in his absence) you took the calf (for worship), and you were Dhaalimoon (polytheists and wrong doers, etc). (Surat al-Baqarah: 51)

When Allah forgives them, He says:

ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿البقرة: ٥٢﴾

Then after that We forgave you so that you might be grateful. (Surat al-Baqarah: 52)

He uses the word 'Afuw, not Ghafoor. Even when Allah talks about those who mocked the reciters of the Qur'an in the Battle of Tabook, He says:

لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ نَعْفَ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبُ

طَائِفَةً بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿التوبة: ٦٦﴾

Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others amongst you because they were Mujrimoon (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc). (Surat at-Tawbah: 66)

He says:

إِنْ نَغْفُ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ

Na'fu not Naghfir (نغفر), because mocking Islamic rituals, matters or believers is a super major sin.

Then fleeing from the battle which is another super major sin, when Allah mentions that He says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ
مَا كَسَبُوا ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾
عمران: ١٥٥

Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met (i.e. the battle of Uhud), it was Shaytaan who caused them to backslide (run away from the battlefield) because of some (sins) they had earned. But Allah, indeed, has forgiven them. Surely, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Forbearing. (Surat Aali Imraan: 155)

He says:

وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

He uses the word 'Afaa instead of Ghafoor, because these are super super major sins.

We are trying to achieve the higher status of the 'Afuw subhaanahu wa ta'aala.

'Ayn Jaaloot in Ramadhaan

PART ONE

Throughout this month, we spoke mostly about spiritual matters. We gave a little talk about Spain, and today Inshaa Allah we will mention another historic victory that Allah blessed this Ummah with in Ramadhaan.

This Ummah needs to have a bond with its honourable beginning. This is an Ummah that will not be a righteous Ummah, unless it knows about its beginning – it has to have ties to its early generations. There is no good in an Ummah that has leaders who taint and twist the glorious history – those who make it seem like it is the norm that Muslims should always live defeated and surrenderous, and Muslims are always supposed to live under tyranny and oppression. The submission is to the enemies of Allah – deluded in their Deen and lacking in their manhood.

The final ten days of Ramadhaan commemorate worship, but at the same time the final ten days of Ramadhaan commemorate defeats of some of the worst enemies of Allah. The defeat of the Tartar and The Battle of 'Ayn Jaaloot – the battle that put an end to the transgression of an empire that massacred the Muslims for a long time. That was 658 after the Hijrah, on the 25th day of Ramadhaan. The Mongols came out of the area of China and their first leader was Jinkeez Khaan (جنکیز خان) (Genghis Khan). Just to give you a brief introduction, you will know what they were about and how arrogant they were when you know what the name of their leader (Jinkeez Khaan) means. It means the compeller of the universe, the king of all kings and the strongest of all the strong, depending on the variations in translations.

He was a man who loved bloodshed, but at the same time he had the ability to gather people. He took advantage of the weak Ummah, even though the Islamic Ummah back then was nearly half of the globe. Back then it went from the borders of China down to Asia, down to Africa, and down to Europe and Spain. Nearly half of the globe was for the Muslims, but there were divisions and problems – things that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam warned about. It is not about numbers and it is not about size, it is about being close and near to Allah.

There was the Khilaafah Abbaasiyyah, but it was a mere name and not a reality. They were busy gaining wealth and making sure that they remain leaders, and not caring about the Ummah and neglecting the Ummah. That was in Iraq and then if you move a little bit down to Egypt, ash-Shaam, Hijaaz and Yemen – it was under the rule of some of the descendants of Salah ad-Deen al-Ayyoobi, but they

were nothing like their father. They cared about power and they split the solid nation that their father established and united – the nation he took off from to destroy the crusaders in Hitteen. The kids and grandkids of Salah ad-Deen brought that strong nation into ruins with their divisions, problems and love of leadership. There were small kingdoms, each one fighting and quarrelling with the other over power.

To make this introduction short so we can get to our talk, it is sufficient to know a paragraph that Ibn al-Atheer wrote in his book on the situation back then. Ibn al-Atheer is one of the top Islamic historians, and this is in his book Al-Kaamil Fit-Taareekh (الكامل في التاريخ). When he talks about it, he says I remained silent about this dark era for a long time. For years, I tried to avoid writing about it. I put a leg forward and a leg backwards, hesitant to write about this era and what the Muslims went through. I wish my mother never gave birth to me, I wish I died before this, I wish I was forgotten and out of sight. Ibn al-Atheer is in agony – he is melting in agony over atrocities that happened back then. Basically, if you say it was among the biggest massacres this earth has seen since the time of Aadam, you would probably be accurate and not exaggerating. Anything close to it would be what Bukhtanasar did to Bani Isra'eel back in Bayt al-Maqdis, five hundred and sixty three years before 'Eesa 'alayhis-salaam. It was a massacre. Ibn al-Atheer goes on to say a woman from the Tartar would enter a house with men, women and children, she would kill the men, women and children, and not one would even think to defend himself because of the defeatist, surrenderous and enslaved mentality. Not a single person in that area would think to defend themselves. He goes on to say I was told that in Muraaghah (مراغة), a man from the Tartar would enter an area with a hundred men, he would kill one after another and not a single one of them would raise his hands or even try to defend himself or his brothers.

They got arrogant, similar to 'Aad. When 'Aad got arrogant, they said who is stronger than us? Hud come here, who is stronger than us?

فَأَمَّا عَادُ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً...

﴿فصلت: ١٥﴾

As for 'Aad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: "Who is mightier than us in strength?" (Surat Fussilat: 15)

We are the strongest – meaning we are even stronger than your Lord Hud.

...أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا

يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿فصلت: ١٥﴾

See they not that Allah, Who created them was mightier in strength than them. And they used to deny Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, revelations, etc)! (Surat Fussilat: 15)

Did they forget the One Who created them? He is mightier than them in strength and power.

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي أَيَّامٍ نَحْسَاتٍ لِّنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿فصلت: ١٦﴾

﴿١٦﴾

So We sent upon them furious wind in days of evil omen (for them) that We might give them a taste of disgracing torment in this present worldly life, but surely the torment of the Hereafter will be more disgracing, and they will never be helped. (Surat Fussilat: 16)

What happened? Allah sent furious winds in days of evil omen to destroy them and give them a taste of disgrace and humiliation in this world, and what is in the life after is even worse. You want to get arrogant 'Aad? It is not a game. You do not get arrogant with Allah and the believers. They want to post up with Allah – you do not post up with Allah Who is stronger than us. How dare you say a statement like that. Okay 'Aad, you want to say you are strong so here is a little bit of wind, let us see how strong you are. The wind took those physical giants in the air like toothpicks and dropped them down to their demise and end on their heads. If you were so strong, why did you not defend yourself? It was just a little bit of wind.

It was the same thing with Namrood. When he stood up to Ibraheem and got arrogant, and said he brings life and death, Allah took him with a little fly. You guys claim you are all that, so defend yourself from a little fly that is going to enter your brain and bring you to restlessness until your death. Defend yourself! When they said the Titanic was a ship that Allah could not sink, Allah sank it for them. You do not post up with Allah.

When they said the army of the Tartar could never be defeated, Allah sent a servant of His to defeat it and destroy it. Our man here is Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz – he took leadership and within one year of his leadership, Allah defeated the Tartar through him. In this blessed month, a small army which was nothing compared to their opponents was literally set up at the spur of the moment. It

was set up in deep, dark times, like times of ours today. It was a time when the Ummah was divided and leaders were more concerned about their thrones than they were about the Ummah. The Khilaafah was an image with no reality to it and disputes were all over. From the deep darkness of that night the Muslims were going through, arose a man and a giant named al-Malik al-Mudhaffar Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz. He took power in 657 after the Hijrah, when the Tartar were at the peak of their transgression. Egypt was at stake, where he was a leader – they were on the verge of attacking Egypt. He took leadership to bring honour and victory to this Ummah. Within a year of taking leadership, he put an end to one of the most dangerous armies the Islamic Ummah was facing.

The Tartar were known for their ruthlessness, recklessness and thunderbolt victories. They were quick and swift in their battles, and most of it was by terrorising everyone. Before they reached an area, the news of their terror, what they do, what they would do and what they are going to do scared everyone to defeat. They went by massive armies, even if their opponents were nobody. You read in history about them that they entered a town and destroyed it into ruins – there is no longer a town after they entered it. They did not care about women, kids, elders, oppressed and oppressors, soldiers and civilians – everyone and everything is the same. They kept no promises and always breached all their covenants.

They started invading Muslim lands by Bukhaarah (بخارى), which today is Uzbekistan. The Muslims were weak and they surrendered there. They gave in and Jinkeez Khaan gave them a promise that if they surrender, he is not going to harm them. In the twelfth volume of Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah (البداية والنهاية), Ibn Katheer said after he promised not to kill any of the Muslims if they surrendered, he killed from them a number only Allah knows. Ibn Katheer said he apprehended the women and raped them. They took the women and raped them in front of their male family members. The massacres of the Tartar went on for over half a century and Muslims lived in massacre after massacre. Everyone is looking – it is not my turf so who cares, I am still in power. Some of the Muslim leaders went on to even help them, as long as they let them stay in power.

The matter really escalated in 654 after the Hijrah, when the Tartar acquired the lands of the Romans. Their leader Hولاako (the son of the founder Jinkeez Khaan) took power and he headed to Baghdad in 656 after the Hijrah. He committed some of the biggest massacres – killing, stealing, ransacking, looting, raping and destroying the Abbaasiyyah Khilaafah. They tried to destroy the Islamic civilisation and they even killed the Khaleefah (al-Mu'tasim Billah), his family and his aides. In Iraq, in less than twelve days Hولاako killed over two million Muslims in Baghdad. He had extreme hatred for Muslims and the smell of Islam. He was considered among the biggest enemies of Islam ever, and that got even worse through his wife – she used to inspire him because she was a crusader who hated Muslims as well. When he entered Baghdad, he did not care about the Khilaafah. The Khilaafah was really like a hollow shell – it was just by

name. His intention was to make the Ummah extinct and he wanted to kill every believer on the face of this earth.

They got arrogant and belligerent. They kept taking Muslim lands, massacring, killing and raping. They passed Baghdad, they went to the Furaat, and they went down to Halab (حلب) in Syria and killed nearly all its people. Then they advanced and headed to Damascus, and then they went down to Naablis (نابلس),

Bayt al-Maqdis and Ghazzah (غزة). There was no resistance and no one to stand up to them. Everyone was being a coward, watching and surrendering. No one was able to stand up to them and no one really wanted to stand up to them. Now they reached the peak of their aggression and once this happens, it does not matter if they are Muslims or non-Muslims, an individual or a nation – once they hit the peak of their oppression, the downfall is imminent and right there.

Holaako the leader sent forty men with a letter to our king here – al-Malik al-Mudhaffar Qutuz. He was the leader of Egypt and Holaako sent a letter threatening him, but Qutuz had another idea. He gathered the leaders and decided to kill all forty of the messengers. They killed all forty and hung their heads on the gates of al-Qaahirah. There are many explanations about why he killed them, but we really do not have time to get into it. By the will of Allah, Qutuz was determined to protect the Ummah. He wanted to fight, especially because he knew that the Tartar were heading to Egypt and there was no way out of it – either him and his people get killed like sheep, they die like men or they become victorious.

Al-Malik al-Mudhaffar Qutuz began to inspire the leaders to fight and he gathered the fighters from all over. He declared that it is time to fight and he raised the flag of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He went out of his way to try to unite with the leaders in the neighbouring area of ash-Shaam. The Muslim leaders next to him (the sons of Salah ad-Deen) were on very bad terms with him, but he kept on telling them that they are going to invade Egypt in a short time so let us put our differences aside, unite for the sake of Allah and fight the Tartar together.

The tensions with the Muslim leaders were so bad, and his main worry was a man called an-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi – the Ameer of Damascus. He was a descendant of our leader Salah ad-Deen al-Ayyoobi – a grandson by blood and not by action. After their victory in Baghdad, this descendant told the Tartar when you come down here, I will help you against Qutuz and I will help you acquire Egypt. He just wants to stay in power. The descendants of Salah ad-Deen destroyed a legacy and a nation that their father Salah ad-Deen established. They all wanted power and that is all their concern was. They divided a strong nation that their father established amongst each other. An Ameer, a king and a leader in Damascus, another Ameer, king and leader in Halab, another Ameer, king and leader in Hamaah (حماة), and another Ameer, king and leader in Hams (حمص).

These are little cities! All chiefs and no Indians, and all seeking power to acquire and inherit for their kids.

Qutuz had bigger goals. It is not about us, me and you in power – it is deeper than that. The honour of the Ummah is at stake and our women are at stake. Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz wanted to defend the Ummah. An-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi (the Ameer of Damascus) wanted to defend his throne, like the leaders of today – people who recline to a life of luxuries, letting the Ummah get massacred and raped all over. So Qutuz tried everything to let the past go behind them, and tried to convince them to unite and face the enemy that was coming to kill them. Qutuz was most worried about this man an-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi who was nearby, because he feared that he was going to betray him and join with the enemies against him, which is really what was going to happen if he stayed in power. To show you how noble Qutuz was and how one man can make a determining difference in this Ummah – Qutuz (the leader of Egypt) knew that the neighbouring man (an-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi) loved leadership, so Qutuz wrote to him and said you can have Egypt. I am the leader of Egypt but you can have it. You can have my land, take my land and just let me be a rep. It will be under your control and I will be under your control. Let us just join together against this common enemy.

Amazing stuff. You could never imagine leaders today doing that. Today you could not get a leader of a little Masjid to step down – someone who no one even knows or cares about. But Qutuz was not about leadership – he was about protecting the honour of the Ummah, the women of the Ummah and the blood of the Ummah! An-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi was arrogant and he refused that offer. The days went on and he was an obstacle to Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz because once the Tartar came, he was going to join them. But when you put your reliance on Allah and you are determined, Allah will find you a way out. A short time after the offer of Qutuz, the Tartar come to Halab and Damascus and oust an-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi. He flees like a coward with his soldiers to Falasteen, and from there he is forced to join the army of Qutuz. That did not last long – he was a total failure so he split away from Qutuz, while most of his soldiers wanted to remain with Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz. Then soon after that, he was killed by some Tartar soldiers. Now Allah got rid of this man and not only that, but Qutuz got his soldiers behind him.

PART TWO

Yesterday we talked on the introduction of one of the great victories of Islam – The Battle of ‘Ayn Jaaloot. In English, it is called The Spring of Goliath. We speak about it in this month because it occurred in this month, and it was one of the greatest victories for this Ummah, during dark times for the Ummah. Muslims need to know such essential parts of their history.

We spoke about how the Ummah was divided and each leader was trying to protect his throne. Each was concerned about himself and a man stood up to the task – a man named Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz. For nearly half a century or so, no one was able to stand up to the transgression of the Tartar, who in less than two weeks killed over two million Muslims in Baghdad. Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz turned out to unite the Muslims, and he started with his neighbouring leader – the Ameer of Damascus and the son of Salah ad-Deen al-Ayyoobi. He refused and instead of uniting with his Muslim brother, he turned against his brother and offered the Tartar help if they let him stay in power. The days went on and the Tartar turned on this man and took his land while he fled. Some Muslims or so called Muslims think power and honour comes through the enemies. They seek honour from other than Allah, which always ends up in humiliation and dishonor sooner or later. They use one, abuse them and dump them. No one could have been more surrenderous and helpful to the enemies of Allah than the prime examples we have today, like al- Ghaddaafi, Mubaarak, and their likes and their brothers. Look where they are at today.

Allah blessed Qutuz in that the son of Salah ad-Deen was ousted from Damascus to Falasteen by the Tartar – the same enemies he offered himself to. Then by force he joined Qutuz, but like I said he proved that he was a failure and left, while his troops remained with Qutuz. Now Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz does not have to worry about an-Naasir Yusuf al-Ayyoobi and a major obstacle is gone. When Allah sees solid, determined, sincere and dedicated men, He prepares for them the means of victory. Look what happened with his opponent.

Now Qutuz needed wealth, so he went to collect for the army and he had ‘Ulamaa to his side. He chose a righteous ‘Aalim and a beacon of truth – al-‘Izz Ibn Abdus-Salaam. Al-‘Izz Ibn Abdus-Salaam supported him with his famous Fataawa and advice – he issued stunning Fataawa that inspired the Ummah. Why do you think people listened to al-‘Izz Ibn Abdus-Salaam? The people listened to al-‘Izz because he had a history of speaking against supposed Muslim rulers who aligned themselves with the crusaders. He used to speak about them and if al-‘Izz Ibn Abdus-Salaam was living today, the surrenderist Murji’ah rejects – the worshippers and slaves of the rulers would call him a Takfeeri and a Khaariji. Out of all the ‘Ulamaa, Qutuz went to al-‘Izz Ibn Abdus-Salaam because sincere leaders know sincere ‘Ulamaa.

He went to him and he said what do you think we should do? Should we go on and attempt to defend ourselves against the Tartar or should we wait, surrender or what? For nearly half a century or so, no one dared to stand up to them. With a firm and solid heart, al-‘Izz said fight them and I guarantee victory. Fight them

and I guarantee victory – that is all he said. He was assuring them – be strong with Allah. There were a lot of ‘Ulamaa in that gathering, but al-‘Izz took centre stage because this is time for the men to speak up. Qutuz told him we have no money, so al-‘Izz said the ruling on this is that when enemies try to invade Muslim lands, you must use all the wealth in the Bayt Maal al-Muslimeen (بيت مال المسلمين). All that goes to the army – to gather and make an army. They are literally making an army from scratch.

When there is no longer money in the Bayt Maal al-Muslimeen (The House of the Wealth of the Muslims), the leader can take from the Ummah – he can impose necessary taxes on them. There were some leaders there and some of them were wealthy, so look what al-‘Izz said – before you impose those taxes I am telling you about, the leaders have to start by bringing in all their excess wealth (anything that is not essential and necessary for them). The leaders complied and one after another would go and bring all his wealth, the gold and jewelry of his wife, set it down and then give an oath – Wallahi I left nothing. This continued until they brought everything. When that was not enough, they imposed one Dinaar on everyone in Egypt who was able to pay.

Then al-Malik al-Mudhaffar sent a small amount of soldiers to check out the movement of the enemies. They saw a small group that was doing the same, so the clashes began. Then finally on the 25th day of Ramadhaan, 658 after the Hijrah and 755 years ago exactly, the two armies clashed with full force. The Muslim army was approximately twenty thousand, and their opponents were nearly two hundred thousand. Some dispute the numbers, but it is right about there. Allah occupied Holaako (the leader at that time) with a relative he was fighting near China, so he sent his best general called Katibghaa (كتبغا) who was among the Romans.

Some say the only reason the Muslims were victorious was because the Tartar were drained at that time and era, and the general he sent was not really as strong as Holaako. Those are the ones who cannot accept or fathom the heavenly victories. When the Muslims want victory through the right ways, Allah will give it to them. They say the general was not all that and the Tartar were really weak, but when I went and read about this general he sent – he was one of the finest and best generals and warriors of that time. Some say he was sixty and some say he was seventy, and he was among those who learned warrior tactics not from Holaako (the son), but from the founder Jinkeez Khaan himself who was a master warrior. Jinkeez Khaan had died thirty four years before this event, so for thirty years this general Katibghaa was doing nothing but fighting. He was a master, a pioneer, and an artistic fighter and general. Nothing could stand his way, or so they thought.

...إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ... ﴿محمد: ٧﴾

If you help (in the cause of) Allah, He will help you. (Surat Muhammad: 7)

On the 25th day of Ramadhaan, the dust of the battle began to rise and the clink of the swords began to echo. The voices grew louder and louder with Allahu Akbar – the ammunition for the believers. It grew louder and louder from the soldiers fighting in the field, and onlooker farmers who were in the valleys nearby. The Muslims mixed with the Tartar and the bodies began to fall – ours in Heaven Inshaa Allah and theirs to Hell. At the beginning it was a stunning victory for the Muslims, but the Muslims wavered a little bit so listen to what righteous leaders do. Qutuz saw them so he goes in front of everyone, takes his helmet off and throws it down, and says:

وا إسلاماه ! وا إسلاماه ! وا إسلاماه !

Islam is at stake! And he pushed forth himself. They saw the leader like that with no helmet and penetrating deep into the enemy lines, so it inspired the Muslims to follow along. The general of the Tartar gets killed, the army gets destroyed and the Muslims chase them away – some were killed and some were apprehended. It was a stunning victory that brought the Tartar to their demise. There was another smaller battle after that in Beesaan (بيسان), where the Muslims fought a deadly, courageous battle and they were granted victory.

This is one of the biggest battles or victories in the history of the Muslims. Why? Because if they did not stop the spread of the Maghool (مغول) at that time, they were coming to take Egypt. Had Qutuz not manned up and stood up to them in 'Ayn Jaaloot, they would have slaughtered the Muslims of Egypt. Then they would have moved on to other parts of Africa and Europe – that was their intention. For nearly half a century, Muslims did not win a single battle against these people and barely anyone ever stood up to them. Why did they win now? I can talk like a philosopher now and go left and right and pretend I am a history expert, but the real reason of the victory here was a secret in something Umar wrote to his general Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas years ago. That is the real reason and no other reason.

You can talk a lot about it and pretend you are a philosopher, but that is the reason. From every angle you look at it, it was a defeat for Muslims. They had an untrained army and they were outnumbered by a massive army that mastered genocide and warfare for half a century. They defeated the army that swept nations away. What is the secret in the letter of Umar? He used to tell his generals – I advise you and the soldiers to fear Allah in all settings. That is the secret. The fear of Allah is the biggest ammunition against your enemies. He told them fear your sins more than you fear your enemies. Muslims win by the sins of their enemies against Allah. If we are equal in sins, they will have power over us because then it becomes power over power. They are always more powerful than us and they have more soldiers, so it is about Taqwa.

After 'Ayn Jaaloot, it was a turning point in the demeanor of the entire Ummah. The demeanor of the entire Ummah changed. He brought back honour to the Ummah and he brought manhood to the men of the Ummah. Now you would no longer see a man watching a hundred men get slaughtered and not even thinking about defending or protecting himself. Now they had new revived hope in Allah, because He showed them in reality. No matter how big and mighty the opponent may seem, as long as they are with Allah, there is victory.

لَا يَغُرَّتْكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿١٩٦﴾ مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ
مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿١٩٧﴾ ﴿آل عمران﴾

Let not the free disposal (and affluence) of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive you. A brief enjoyment; then, their ultimate abode is Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 196-197)

Muslims began to realise that with Allah on their side, they can get victory. They no longer need to sit back and wait for the Mahdi, like some used to say and some say today. When Allah wants victory and good for someone, there is no one who can deprive him of it.

وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ
فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴿الأنعام﴾

And if Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it but He, and if He touches you with good, then He is Able to do all things. (Surat al-An'aam: 17)

وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا
رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ ۚ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ
﴿يونس: ١٠٧﴾

And if Allah touches you with hurt, there is none who can remove it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His Favour which He causes it to reach whomsoever of His slaves He will. And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat Yunus: 107)

The Muslims had been treated worse than animals for over half a century. They were massacred, annihilated and raped, with each dog wanting a piece of the flesh of the Ummah. The snakes were freely roaming around the Muslim territories, but now with 'Ayn Jaaloot the game was over. The great victory

brought back prestige, honour and status to the Ummah, and even justice to the non-Muslims. The victory was so smooth, swift and unexpected that the great army of Halaako did not even think about taking revenge after this, unlike what happened in the past – their revenge would be superb. All history documents after this is a little scrimmage when they sent out a small army with a few soldiers, just to prove that they exist, but there was nothing major or significant. The honour of the Ummah was retrieved.

Today you have seen those in the lands of Amr Ibn al-'Aas and the lands of Laa Ilaaha Illallah, who called for other than the rule of Allah, those who said let us vote on it or agree to it, and those who were silent about it. We say the rule of Allah (the rule of Laa Ilaaha Illallah) is a principle of Islam – the Sharee'ah of Allah. They say no, it is step by step and we do not want to upset the west or other non-Islamic factions. They want to please others on the account of Allah. What is the result? The result is humiliation and defeat. The same people you wanted to please when you were in power and the reason why you did not want to implement the rule of Allah, are now thirty million against you. They did not please Allah when they were in power, so neither Allah or the people were pleased with them. The Ummah has got to understand the ABCs of Tawheed. What we teach our kids in texts – we must let it register in our faith.

مَنْ التَّمَسَ رِضَا اللَّهِ ، بِسَخَطِ النَّاسِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ، وَأَرْضَى عَنْهُ
النَّاسَ ، وَمَنْ التَّمَسَ رِضَا النَّاسِ بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ ، سَخَطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ ،
وَأَسْخَطَ عَلَيْهِ النَّاسَ

This is a Hadith. Whoever seeks the pleasure of Allah at the risk of displeasing people, Allah will take care of him, protect him and honour him. But whoever seeks the pleasure of people at the risk of displeasing Allah, Allah will abandon him to the care of the people.

You wanted to please the people with this step by step stuff and the voting stuff, so let them protect you. Thirty million of them went against you. You need to understand that with Laa Ilaaha Illallah on our side, there is nothing that can defeat this Ummah. That is what he told a ten year old Ibn Abbaas – if the whole universe gathered against you, they could not defeat you.

After 'Ayn Jaaloot, people lived in peace and honour for decades to come. Actually, it lasted for over a hundred and forty six years. No more oppression, no more violence, no more massacres, no more displacing and no more raping. The Tartar were stunned from this for a hundred and forty six years, until a leader of the Tartar came – his name was Taymoor Ling and he entered Halab and Damascus. When people turned away from Allah, Allah granted him power over the believers, but that was a hundred and forty six years after The Battle of 'Ayn Jaaloot.

After 'Ayn Jaaloot, Syria and Egypt formed a strong bond and it was considered like an armour and heart to the Muslim world. It was a strategic, political, geographical, educational, and historic bond. It showed that unity of the Ummah was essential because Allah said:

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ...
﴿الأنفال: ٤٦﴾

And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Surat al-Anfaal: 46)

You become failures if you dispute. After 'Ayn Jaaloot, the lowlife leaders became exposed, especially the grandsons of the great leader Salah ad-Deen – the ones who were only worried about their thrones and remaining in power. They were the ones who used the enemies of Allah against their brothers, just to remain in power. After this victory, the fake leaders were exposed and they too vanished. Some of them accepted the leadership of Qutuz and joined under him, but most of them vanished away into the wastebasket of history.

Another benefit was that when the bond between Damascus and Egypt strengthened, the Muslims went out to small municipalities or Imaaraat in Syria and Palestine. The crusaders had been there for a hundred and sixty six years, and they were causing harm to the Muslims. These were Imaaraat that not even Noor ad-Deen, 'Imaad ad-Deen and Salah ad-Deen reached. Now the blood descendants of al-Ayyoobi had reclined to this world, but the descendants of al-Ayyoobi by faith and Imaan took over from where they left off and stopped these crusader municipalities from harming the Muslims.

I am telling you the benefits of this victory, and to me one of the most amazing affects of this victory was that the Tartar began to see Islam. They began to read and study it, and amazingly they began to embrace Islam in large groups. They saw how Muslims were when they were in power. Now the Muslims had the upper hand and they could easily do a genocide and they could rape them, but there was no rape, no massacre and no imprisoning. They did not even put them under scrutiny like our enemies do when they have the upper hand. They were astonished to see how the Muslims treated them and forgave them. They expected rape and genocide, but that was not Islam. They saw the justice, safety and manners of Islam when the Muslims had the upper hand. That being the main reason, along with the fact that the religion of the Tartar was literally a manmade religion. Jinkeez Khaan made that religion up, so they had a spiritual void which they filled with Islam. In fact, six years before this big victory, one of the cousins of Holaako learned about Islam and embraced it, and he was a big, prestigious man. Holaako was shocked by that and fought him.

Finally, I ask Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala to ease the suffering of this Ummah, and may He replace the traitors of today with the likes of our beloved leader Sayf ad-Deen Qutuz Rahimahullahu Ta'aala.

'Izzah in Ramadhaan

Ramadhaan is a university of many courses. It is a main course and the essential course in Ibaadah of course, and spiritual aspects. But there are also courses in Ramadhaan on raising kids, on patience, on sharing and feeling part of the Ummah, on shame and modesty, on fear of Allah, on Tawbah and sincerity. In Ramadhaan, you learn something about each one of those, and each one of those is something worthy of several talks. However, today we are going to take one of those areas and that is pride, honour and glory, which in 'Arabi is called 'Izzah (عزة).

Islam is a religion of highness and elevation – a religion of diligence, seriousness and hard work. Ramadhaan is the month of pride and honour, and it teaches you this on several levels and several fronts. A person fasting is in an arena to attain honour on different fronts. Someone is going to say what are you talking about – how is Ramadhaan connected to 'Izzah? When one leaves food, water and his desires, and then one leaves that which is prohibited throughout the year, he raises himself over worldly and earthly matters. He elevates himself by leaving the low and despicable matters, or possibly neutral matters. When he does that, he frees himself from habits, traditions and desires, and that is 'Izzah to himself and over himself. When he becomes victorious over his own Nafs (his self inclination), then he has attained the peak of 'Izzah because then nothing can stand in front of him.

He attains 'Izzah and honour on another front when he stays away from controversy, arguing with others, ignorance and anger over others, and harming others.

إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ صَوْمِ أَحَدِكُمْ ، فَلَا يَرْفُثْ وَلَا يَصْخَبْ

When any one of you is fasting, he should neither indulge in obscene language nor should he raise his voice.

That gives you honour and 'Izzah in dealing with others. A believer attains 'Izzah in the university of Ramadhaan with his worship (fasting), the deeds he does and abandoning that which is prohibited – that is the deep secret in attaining 'Izzah to one's internal self. That is boosting the Imaan and getting closer to Ar-Rahmaan – that is 'Izzah.

Believers attain 'Izzah in this month when they are encouraged to spend. What has spending got to do with 'Izzah now? It has got a lot to do with it. When you are spending, it protects the weak and the poor. You save them from asking, you save the elders from poverty, and you save the low ones from being desperate. You raise them and elevate them from being low to

having 'Izzah. Islam wants you to live in honour, dignity and pride on all fronts, and that is why Islam said the hand giving is better than the hand receiving. You can go on with many examples on this. Honour, pride and dignity attain you love and respect. It is only bad when one makes this a goal without keeping the guidance of Allah attached to it – that is when it veers off course.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told Ibn Abbaas – if you ask, ask Allah. If you seek aid, seek it in Allah. Why? That is 'Izzah there. In Sahih al-Bukhari, az-Zubayr Ibn al-'Awwaam radhiallahu 'anhu said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said it is better for one to take a rope, go and cut wood and carry it on his back, than to ask others. Do anything but do not ask others – that is 'Izzah. In fact, in Sahih Muslim some people came to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to give him Bay'ah (allegiance), and they gave him Bay'ah on Islam, the five pillars and then on obedience to him, and then he said do not ask anything from people. Why? To instill honour, pride and glory in this Ummah.

Wahb Ibn Munabbih said to a man who kept going to the rulers and asking them – woe to you, you keep returning to a man who closes his door in your face, shows you his poor side and hides his wealth from you. You leave the One who opens His door day and night, shows you how rich He is and asks you to ask Him. Taawoos told 'Ataa – do not ever ask anyone who closes his door before you or has mediators or secretaries. Go to the One whose doors are always open until The Judgment Day, the One who ordered you to ask and promised you an answer. Abu Haazim (a scholar of his time) was asked what is your wealth? How much money do you have? He said my confidence in Allah is what I have, and despair in all human beings. The Ameer of his time wrote him a letter telling him whatever you need of wealth, write to me and I will send it to you. He said I have asked the One who gives me and whatever He gives me I am content with, and whatever He deprives me of I am pleased with. I am happy with what Allah gave me, so I do not need anything from you.

This is the month of 'Izzah. Let us feel this feeling, let us seek it where it is at and let us try to attain it. Let us have that quality in ourselves and revive it in this Ummah. Not only is the 'Izzah on a personal level, but it is on a higher level than that – the Ummah has to have a level of 'Izzah as a whole. Allah honoured this Ummah and Allah gave this Ummah 'Izzah in this month, in Badr – the battle of 'Izzah. The month of Ramadhaan is the month in which the greatest conquest of all conquests took place – the conquest of Makkah was in Ramadhaan.

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ﴿الفتح: ١﴾

Verily, We have given you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) a manifest victory. (Surat al-Fath: 1)

In the third year of Hijrah in Ramadhaan, the Muslims fended off an attack by Quraysh when they were going to retaliate because of their defeat in Badr. In the fifth year of Hijrah, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam began to prepare for Khandaq in Ramadhaan. Spain, the defeat of the Tartar and many more historic matters that brought 'Izzah to this Ummah.

'Izzah (honour and pride) is mentioned many times in the Qur'an.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا... ﴿فَاطِر: ١٠﴾

Whosoever desires honour, power and glory then to Allah belong all honour, power and glory [and one can get honour, power and glory only by obeying and worshipping Allah (Alone)]. (Surat Faatir: 10)

Umar goes to get the keys of Bayt al-Maqdis. He goes traveling on foot from Madinah to Jerusalem and shares the way with his servant. In the days of Umar, it was not a Jew or a Christian who got oppressed. We are not going to say a Muslim – not a Jew, not a Christian and not even an animal. Umar goes beyond what the 20th century can even imagine. Umar paves the way for sheep so they will not stumble. He goes from Madinah to Jerusalem and he takes turns riding the camel – his servant takes a turn, Umar takes a turn and the camel takes a turn. Yes, that is the beauty of Islam – even the camel gets to rest. Each one gets a third of the way. May Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala send us the likes of Umar.

Abu 'Ubaydah goes to the outskirts to greet his Khaleefah. When Umar happens to arrive, it is raining. Please visualise this scene with me – this scene where Umar is leading a camel, it is muddy because it is the desert, and he ties his shoelaces on his shoulder (one on the front and one on his back). Ibn Katheer went into detail describing the scene. He says the hot sun was hitting the bald head of Umar, meaning he did not have anything on his head. He was not wearing anything on his head or feet, one side of his dress was described as fully shredded, and the other parts were stitched up.

You can just imagine Abu 'Ubaydah going to his leader, taking Umar to the side and meeting with him. Umar, you are going to meet the heads of the Romans (the bishops and the priests). They are surrendering the keys to you – this is a historic event Umar. Umar, how about you change your clothes? That is when Umar lets out a sigh and says had anyone other than you said this, I would have made an example out of him for the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Basically, he is saying Abu 'Ubaydah, you are special – you have expanded the Muslim land beyond what many did and you are among the top generals of this Ummah. Had it been anyone else who said that, I would have punished him to set an example for the whole Ummah to learn a lesson from. Then Umar said his golden tweet – we are people who are honoured with Islam, if we choose other than Islam we will be humiliated. Anything other than Islam and anything other than the teachings of Islam.

This last quote and parts of the story are mentioned by Ibn al-Mubaarak in Az-Zuhd (الزهد), Ibn Abi Shaybah, Hannaad, al-Haakim in Al-Mustadarak (المستدرک), Abu Na'eem in Al-Hulyah (الحلیة), and it is in the fourth volume of Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah (البداية والنهاية). It is as authentic and solid as if it was in the Sihaah, and some versions have certain details that are different at the beginning of the story.

He told us the simple solution to the matters of the Ummah, and how to attain 'Izzah. Mere words of telling him to change his clothes got him upset because he deemed that he is seeking pride in other than Islam, and he was going to use the Dhurrah (whip) over the head of one of the biggest generals.

أوه ! لو قال هذا غيرك يا أبا عبيدة - لجعلته نكالا لأمة محمد
صلى الله عليه وسلم ، نحن قوم أعزنا الله بالإسلام ، فمهما
ابتغينا العزة بغير الإسلام أذلنا الله

Wallahil-'Adheem my father made me memorise it when I was less than five years old. Embed it into the hearts of your children – this is how you ascertain 'Izzah. Sometimes I wonder what Umar would do with his Dhurrah on the heads of the 'Ulamaa today who are not seeking honour in a new set of clothing, but they are seeking honour in a new set of values and ideologies – those who throw themselves in the laps of every predator that looks at them, seeking honour and glory through them.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا... ﴿فَاطِرُ: ١٠﴾

Whosoever desires honour, power and glory then to Allah belong all honour, power and glory [and one can get honour, power and glory only by obeying and worshipping Allah (Alone)]. (Surat Faatir: 10)

If you desire honour, glory and power, then it comes from Allah. All of it – He did not have to say it in the verse but it is for emphasis – all of it comes from Allah. It is not arrogance, but it is not being ashamed to be a Muslim. You show your pride in the teachings of Islam and the laws of Islam. You do not care about those who criticise you and the blame of the blamers – that is 'Izzah.

A famous 'Aalim called al-Mahdi was sitting in the Masjid once, and the Khaleefah happened to walk into the Masjid. Everyone ran to the Khaleefah and this man remained sitting in the Masjid doing whatever he was doing. They told him do you not want to get up and greet the Khaleefah? While the Khaleefah was

listening, he said people only stand to the Lord of the universe. It was not a special greeting of Salaam, he is going to embrace him or he is a friend he has not seen in a long time, where you can stand up. It was just people going and crowing around to kiss up to him and get a look at him. The guards went to apprehend this man but the Khaleefah said stop, do not touch him, Wallahi what he said made every hair on my body stand. The Shaykh had pride and 'Izzah, and the leader had fear of Allah. Those who adulate and kiss up to leaders for money, prestige and others reasons have lowered themselves, and they lack pride and 'Izzah in this religion.

Maalik Ibn Anas was an Imaam of his time and Haroon ar-Rasheed (the leader) told him come over and teach me and my kids. There is no Imaam like Maalik today and there is no leader like Haroon ar-Rasheed today. Any 'Aalim would have dreamed of that opportunity, because all you have to do is read in the western books about how much they say Haroon used to spend on knowledge and poets. Imaam Maalik said to him:

الْعِلْمُ يُؤْتَى وَلَا يَأْتِي

You seek knowledge, knowledge does not come to you.

When Haroon ar-Rasheed entered the house of Imaam Maalik, he sat up and put his back on the wall. He was getting comfortable and Maalik said honour your elders – I am older, respect me and sit up. Haroon complied and showed him respect. Then Haroon told him the statement – he said others lowered themselves to us with their knowledge and we did not benefit from them, we humbled ourselves to your knowledge and we benefited from it.

'Izzah is on all levels. Look at the Khulafaa' (leaders) back then – even the oppressive leaders. In this month 223 after the Hijrah, al-Mu'tasim in 'Amooriyyah. Al-Mu'tasim went to fend off someone called Baabik al-Harmi and when he went to fight him, the Romans saw a weakness that the Muslims had. They took a portion of the Muslim land – they invaded it and killed the children and the elders. They had no mercy and compassion on anyone and they did not spare anyone. They took over a thousand female Muslimate as slaves (concubines) and they slaughtered their kids before them. Then they took Muslim male prisoners, put iron rods in their eyes, cut their ears off and snatched their noses off. Then comes a shout from one of the Muslims:

واعتصماه !

She shouted for help from the Mu'tasim and on the spot, he went to her aid.

What a mockery when you look at today, what foolishness. The Syrians are being massacred and it is something that is going to go in history as one of the top catastrophes. It has been going on for two years but after Mufti Obama declares

war and openly says now he is going to help them, suddenly the Shuyookh pop up in Egypt and elsewhere, everyone wants to talk about it and speak those big terminologies. Where were you two years before that? Where were you two years ago when they were getting slaughtered like sheep? Those are hailed as heroes after two years and after they were given the green light? What an Ummah in their low thinking and what a backward thinking Ummah we have. I ask Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala to open their eyes so they can analyse things the proper way, because there is no 'Izzah. Those 'Ulamaa are the heroes? They asked a Syrian man what do you think about what Mufti Obama is doing and what the Shuyookh are doing now they got the green light – they are speaking, meeting, declaring and using the big terminologies. He said we never waited for them and we do not see the affect of that here. Nothing of that is apparent to us and they are two years late on that.

When a woman called Waa Mu'tasimaah to that Khaleefah, he did not sit and think and wait two years. History says he jumped off his bed and he said everyone prepare – history documents that he reacted on the spot. One of the historians said that the woman who shouted Waa Mu'tasimaah was a descendant of Faatimah radhiallahu 'anha (meaning a descendant of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and when she called Waa Mu'tasimaah she was being tortured. Mocking and laughing, the king of the Romans said you think al-Mu'tasim is going to come here on horses of Dalmatian to rescue you? Horses of Dalmatian were expensive and a special, rare breed of horses. Al-Mu'tasim told his soldiers go get me every Dalmatian horse you can get, and they went and got him more than four thousand Dalmatian horses. He put them at the front of the army and when he got near to 'Amooriyyah, he said no one touch that woman but me – I am going to be the one to rescue her. When he got to her and he freed her, he said:

إشهدي لي عند جدك أني أتيت خلاصك ، وفي مقدمة عسكري
أربعة آلاف أبلق

Testify – go tell your grandfather (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) I rescued you with four thousand Dalmatian horses leading the army.

That is the men. He ordered that the one who slapped her be executed and then he torched 'Amooriyyah. This was in 223 after the Hijrah, in Ramadhaan.

Sometimes part of 'Izzah is that one might have to say a word that is going to cost him his life or put him in prison. For Islam, it is worth it. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said the best of all martyrs is Hamzah, and a man who stands up in the face of an oppressive leader, enjoins the good and forbids the evil, and is killed by him. It is in Al-Mustadarak Al-Haakim.

Look at the 'Izzah of Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas – this is what we want to establish. His mother told him you choose a religion other than that of your fathers and

forefathers? Wallah I am not going to eat or drink or sit in the shade, until I die or you change your religion. I am going to die and then you are going to die in agony, because you let me die. He tried to convince her and he was very dutiful – an example of being dutiful to his mother. When he saw it was not working, the ‘Izzah came out. Mum, sit down, we have to talk. You know how much I love you, you know how much everybody talks about my love to you and how I am dutiful to you. Wallahi if you had one hundred souls, one after the other left out of you and the only way to save them would be for me to leave this religion, I am not going to leave it. Eat and drink and go in the shade.

The women set examples of ‘Izzah for the men of today to follow. Before Abu Sufyaan became Muslim, he went to Madinah to negotiate some matters with the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, so he goes to the house of his daughter who is the wife of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam – Umm Habeebah. His daughter quickly folds the mattress of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, and he could not believe what he saw. What is going on here? He tells the daughter – am I too good for that mattress or is that mattress too good for me? He could not believe his eyes. He thought maybe she was too ashamed to have him sit on such a mattress, because his stature is above that. She said no, you are not worthy of sitting on a mattress of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, you are a Mushrik Najis. He said you have gone crazy after me daughter. No, she did not go crazy – pride and ‘Izzah in Islam.

There is an agenda by those sell out figures we have, to strip Muslims of pride and ‘Izzah in their religion. Some people see it and others do not. You do not do Salah only – you do Salah and you spice it with ‘Izzah. You do your Hijaab, your Nikaab or your bead with ‘Izzah in it. You teach Islam with ‘Izzah, especially us here in the west. Show your pride in this religion because if you do not, Allah will replace you with those who will show pride in their religion.

Someone might say come on Shaykh, the Ummah is weak now and it is different. You can still show your ‘Izzah and let me give you some examples. Someone will say that is when the Khilaafah was and Muslims were respected, but you could be weak and still show your ‘Izzah. You could be a prisoner and still show your ‘Izzah. You could be under torture and duress, and still show your ‘Izzah.

Everyone knows the story of Bilaal. What about Khubayb Ibn ‘Adi when they took him as a prisoner and they were going to crucify him. He said let me pray two Rak’ahs and he got up to pray two Rak’ahs. Even in those two Rak’ahs, he showed ‘Izzah. He prayed and he hastened in them, so they will not think that he fears death. They asked him – would you not rather be at your home with your wife and children, and Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) be here instead of you? He said I would rather be where I am at here, rather than know that the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam got a little thorn in the tip of his finger. Rather be where Khubayb? Khubayb, explain to this defeated, surrenderous Ummah – where would you rather be? He would rather be crucified. He would rather his flesh be shredded, rather than know that the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam got a little thorn in the tip of his finger. ‘Izzah!

Then they began to hail his blessed body with spears and arrows, as he says:

إِلَى اللَّهِ أَشْكُو غُرْبَتِي ثُمَّ كُرْبَتِي
وَمَا أَرْصَدَ الْأَحْزَابُ لِي عِنْدَ مَصْرَعِي

O Allah, I complain to You the hardship I face, and that which the coalition have conspired to do to me.

فَإِذَا الْعَرْشِ ، صَبَّرْنِي عَلَى مَا يُرَادُّ بِي
فَقَدْ بَضَّعُوا لَحْمِي وَقَدْ يَاسَ مَطْمَعِي

O Allah The Lord of The Throne, grant me patience in that which they plan to do to me. O Allah, I despair in everyone except You.

وَذَلِكَ فِي ذَاتِ الْإِلَهِ وَإِنْ يَشَاءُ
يُبَارِكْ عَلَى أَشْلَاءِ شَلَوْ مُمَزَّعٍ

All that is for the sake of Allah and if He wills, He will bless the shredded pieces of my flesh.

وَقَدْ خَيَّرُونِي الْكُفْرَ وَالْمَوْتَ دُونَهُ
وَقَدْ هَمَلْتُ عَيْنَايَ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَجْزَعٍ

They gave me the choice of Kufr, I would rather take death over that. Then he said my eyes tear, but he was trying to explain that they did not tear out of fear from them, but out of fear from You.

He goes on to elaborate:

وَمَا بِي حَذَارُ الْمَوْتِ ، إِنِّي لَمَيِّتٌ
وَلَكِنْ حَذَارِي جَحْمَ نَارٍ مُلْفَعٍ

I fear not death, I fear Hell O Allah, I fear You O Allah. He is crying and weeping out of fear from Allah, and he is dying and getting shredded for the sake of Allah!

What are we going to say? Laa Hawla Wa Laa Quwwata Illaa Billah. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raaji'oon.

فَلَسْتُ أَبَالِي حِينَ أُقْتَلُ مُسْلِمًا عَلَى أَيِّ جَنْبٍ كَانَ فِي اللَّهِ مَضْرَعِي

Look at the 'Izzah. I do not care what side I die on, as long as I die a Muslim.

فَلَسْتُ بِمُبْدٍ لِلْعَدُوِّ تَخَشُّعًا وَلَا جَزَعًا إِنِّي إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعِي

I am not going to show to my enemies humbleness or humility, I am going to show it to Allah – the One I am going to return to.

Ultimate, eloquent meanings of 'Izzah. 'Izzah is not compromise, even at weak points. Abu Bakr was at his weakest point when the whole Arabian Peninsula turned against him, but he stood up firm. He was one man and he said if you do not help me, I am going to go to them by myself.

Look at Ibn Mas'ood in times like ours – times where people were terrified and scared. It was a weak point of the Ummah and one of the weakest points during the time of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He says I am going to go shout to them the verses of the Qur'an. They said they are going to hit you, but he said Allah is going to protect me. What made him go out to do that? Is it a Waajib? No, it is the pride and 'Izzah. He went out and started reciting:

الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾ الرَّحْمَنُ: ١

The Most Beneficent (Allah)! Has taught (you mankind) the Qur'an (by His Mercy). (Surat Ar-Rahmaan: 1-2)

People said what is going on with Ibn Umm Ma'bad? He is by the Ka'bah shouting. They run up to him and they beat him. He goes louder, so they beat him. He bleeds and he goes unconscious, then his companions come to him and wake him up. He says I want to go at it again, but they stopped him and they refused to let him. Why did he do that? There is no Waajib in the Qur'an, there is no ordain and it is not a Sunnah. He did it because of his 'Izzah and to show his 'Izzah.

When Khaalid reached Hiraqil, they were amazed at the pride and the advancing of the Muslims. Hiraqil asked his people what is going on here? Are their people more? He said no. Are their weapons more advanced? No. He said what is going on? An old man said let me speak. He spoke and he said these are people who do not drink, and we drink – 'Izzah. These are people who do not commit adultery

and we commit adultery – ‘Izzah. These are people who pray the night and we do not pray the night. These are people who fast the day and we do not fast the day. Hiraqil said indeed that is how victory is achieved.

‘Izzah is not about scaring and terrorising people. No, ‘Izzah is prestige and status. We need to revive that in our hearts. In 1876 of the western calendar, Sultaan Abdul-Hameed II was a young thirty four year old man and he could have had whatever he wanted. They offered him whatever gold and wealth he wanted, to give up a little portion of Falasteen. He had problems in Balqaan, problems with the Russians and pressure from all over, but he said to Dr Herzl – do not try it, I will not give a hand span of the land of Falasteen. It is not owned by me, it is owned by the Islamic Ummah – the Ummah that irrigated that land with their blood. Save your millions, because the only way you will get it is if the Khilaafah goes down and then you can take it for free. While I am alive, I would rather for a knife to shred my flesh piece by piece, than to give a hand span of the land of the Muslims away. They tried to assassinate him many times for those words and that stand. Wallahi, a knife shredding me alive is easier for me, than to give a little hand span of Falasteen away. ‘Izzah!

...وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

﴿المنافقون: ٨﴾

But honour, power and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam), and to the believers, but the hypocrites know not. (Surat al-Munaafiqoon: 8)

Show your pride. I am not going to say do not do Haraam, but do not do Haraam and show your pride in it. Do the ordains and put your pride in it. Do the Sunnah and have pride in it. Do the Waajib with pride in it. Have pride when asked about Islam. When asked about the teachings of Islam, do not be shy and embarrassed. When it is time for Salah, jump up to it wherever you are at. It is not illegal – jump up to it with pride, dignity and glory. Learn your bright white history, so you can defend this history with pride when they talk about it. Show your pride in the laws of Islam – the laws of the Creator. Show them how good they are and how their laws have proven to be a failure, while the laws of Laa Ilaaha Illallah Muhammadar-Rasoolullah are the laws of the Creator and the only laws suitable for mankind. Show your pride in that.

Fasting of the Tongue

One of the courses you get out of fasting is not only depriving yourself from the stomach and private part desires that we all know about, but you also have to work on other prohibitions, especially matters that pertain to the tongue. One of the biggest courses in the university of Ramadhaan is training yourself to refrain from lying, oppression, backbiting, and all those tongue ailments in particular. There are many ailments, but those tongue ailments in particular, and we are going to go over this issue.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

لَيْسَ الصَّيَّامُ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ إِنَّمَا الصَّيَّامُ مِنَ اللَّغْوِ وَالرَّفَثِ

In Mustadarak al-Haakim. Abu Hurayrah said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said fasting is not just abstaining from food and drink, rather fasting is abstaining from idle and foul, vain and obscene speech.

That is all included in fasting. You all know the Hadith – if someone curses you or treats you in an improper, ignorant or foolish manner, you say:

إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

Let me say a side issue on this. The Hadith in Bukhari mentions it twice in one Hadith:

إِنِّي صَائِمٌ إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

I am fasting, I am fasting. Most people when they say it, you hear:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

They change the statement into a Du'aa, which is not part of a Hadith. It is better to stick to the appropriate wording of the Hadith, which is:

إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

There are other Ahaadith pertaining to this matter.

مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ

In Sahih al-Bukhari. Whoever does not abandon falsehood in word and in action, then Allah has no need for him to leave his food and his drink.

In another Hadith in Sunan an-Nasaa'ee, Ibn Maajah and al-Haakim, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said perhaps a fasting person gets nothing out of his fast but hunger. In another narration which is only in Ibn Maajah, it says a fasting person attains nothing out of his fast but hunger and thirst. There are some people who get only hunger and thirst out of their fast.

All these Ahaadith and there are many more. Someone will say alright, you mentioned all these Ahaadith so if I curse someone, backbite someone or lie, I have negated my fast so I might as well go eat and drink. Some believe that and some really do that. What we say and we always reiterate is that you do not understand these Ahaadith like you and I understand them, or like I want to understand them – we understand them like they were meant to be understood. The 'Ulamaa mentioned and talked about this and actually, the Hanaabilah, the Shaafi'iyyah and everyone from the old generation who I read from said the same thing except the Dhaahiriyyah. The Dhaahiriyyah are those who take the texts and understand them in such an extreme apparent way, and they are too literal in their understanding. Everyone else said what one breaks and voids is not the fast, it is the reward – meaning he will lose the reward if he does any of these things. Depending on what he does, he gets sins, and to top that off not only does he get sins, but he loses the reward for his worship (according to whatever he did). Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said if gossip and backbiting were to break the fast, none of us would have a fast.

Evil speech, lying, backbiting and gossip are all prohibited throughout the year, so why is it emphasised more so in Ramadhaan when one is fasting? Because you are doing something contrary to the wisdom and purpose of the worship you are engaged in. You are in a pure worship and you are trying to purify yourself, so you are doing something that defeats the purpose. It is because like we always say, in Ramadhaan the deeds are multiple folds, but that comes at a cost because sins are multiple folds as well. On an ordinary day, you get sins for gossip and backbiting. In Ramadhaan, it is deeper – you get more sins for that because of the holy days. Not only that, but you get stripped of the reward for that hard work you are doing – the Qiyaam, Salah and Ibaadah. Now do you understand why?

Someone says I lied and I ruined my fast, I am not getting reward out of it so I might as well eat and drink. What happened is you got the sins for whatever you did, you lost the reward of the Ibaadah and now you want to top that off by a super major sin of voiding your actual fast? The point of these Ahaadith is to recruit you – to tell you that you have a lot of deeds and a lot of hard work that you are going to lose if you continue to do this type of sin. You have a lot at stake

and this is a boot camp to straighten me and you up for the rest of the year, and then for the rest of our lives.

Some of the Salaf said the easiest part of fasting is leaving your food and your water. Wallahi that is true. The beauty of fasting is that it is a worship that continues on throughout the day (from pre-dawn until sunset) – it is a continuous and ongoing Ibaadah, meaning you get reward even while you are sleeping. That is until you backbite someone – then the Ibaadah stops (meaning the reward stops). Jaabir said if you fast – let your hearing fast, let your tongue fast from lying, let your limbs fast, do not harm neighbours. Everything has to fast.

In these Ahaadith that we mentioned, false speech includes all kinds of speech. It includes lying, backbiting, slandering, insulting, cursing, false testimony, accusing believers, and even yelling is something that should not be done in Ramadhaan. Each one of these is a topic to talk about for many Halaqaat. The tongue is a small muscle, but a deeply dangerous one. That is why the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam told us that one of the major matters that causes people entry to Jahannam is the tongue. The tongue is a killer, it is a ruiner and a destroyer. It could be one word that you say which attains the wrath of Allah and puts one seventy years into Hell. May Allah save you from that. And it could be that muscle you use to utter one word that makes you among the most successful.

Umar radhiallahu ‘anhu said I walked in on Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq radhiallahu ‘anhu one time while he was holding his tongue. He had his tongue in his hand and he is saying this destroyed me – my tongue destroyed me. What are you talking about Abu Bakr? Your tongue destroyed you? How did your tongue destroy you? The tongue that has done nothing but exert all its efforts in support of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. You Abu Bakr say your tongue destroyed you when you are going to be called by every single one of the eight gates of Jannah? The man who the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam smiled to his leadership in Salah, on the morning that he sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam died in. The best man after the Prophets, radhiallahu ‘anhu. But they used to hold themselves accountable on a high standard.

Do not get the perception that slander and backbiting is only by tongues and lips. It could be by a wink or a gesture, and it only gets worse on Twitter, Facebook and internet forums. Does that count? Yes that does count. Someone might say but I was disguised by the screen and nobody knew.

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى ﴿العلق: ١٤﴾

Knows he not that Allah does see (what he does)? (Surat al-‘Alaq: 14)

Have you not heard the Qur’an? Does he not know that Allah sees?

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَى مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ﴿١٨﴾ الحاقة: ١٨

That Day shall you be brought to Judgment, not a secret of you will be hidden. (Surat al-Haaqqah: 18)

On that Day you shall be exposed to view – no secrets. Now you can keep it a secret, but no secret of yours will remain hidden on that Day.

...سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيُسْأَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ الزخرف: ١٩

Their evidence will be recorded, and they will be questioned! (Surat az-Zukhruf: 19)

There is no difference between tongue and gesture, and Twitter and Facebook. You will be held accountable for all that.

Ramadhaan came to let this awareness and fear of Allah surface in our hearts. Yes there are some days left in Ramadhaan, but it is never too late. Try this from now until the end of Ramadhaan – every night before you go to sleep, do the checks and balances on the activities of your tongue for that day. If you lied, mocked, slandered, cursed, said derogatory words or were involved in backbiting, set aside five dollars or twenty dollars (whatever you can do) for each time you made a mistake. After a week or by the end of Ramadhaan, you will see you washed your tongue out. If you continue from now until the end of Ramadhaan with that method, you will continue Bi'ithnillahi Ta'aala for the rest of your life. You will see a difference in yourself.

We are not expecting you to be an angel but when you stumble, you jump up with repentance (Tawbah) and continue on the right path. Ramadhaan is to instill god consciousness, mindfulness of Allah and piety in you – that is Taqwa. A strong Imaanic immune system so that you fear Allah in every word you say – that is Taqwa. I want you to imagine that someone knows his boss has installed some secret cameras, or as a lot of people know – the government has their cars, phones and houses tapped, and they have cameras by their houses. A lot of people know that, so they are watching every exact word. Does he ever forget there is a wiretap or that his boss has installed a hidden camera? He never forgets that and he is always on alert – it is in his subconscious. How do we forget Raqeeb and 'Ateed?

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴿١٨﴾ ق: ١٨

Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it). (Surat Qaaf: 18)

Do not say like some people say – when I talked about him, I got it off my chest. No, keeping whatever you want to say in your chest is better than having it on your register before Allah on The Judgment Day. Muslims have different ways of thinking.

Ibn Mas'ood said I do not know anything more worthy of a long prison sentence than my tongue. That is the only thing that is worthy of going to prison. In Sulh al-Hudaybiyyah, Umar said a few words that he deemed were out of line. He was attempting to convince the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to change his mind so he can fight Quraysh, but at that time the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was not ordered to fight them. Umar wanted to change his mind and the purpose of him saying what he said was because he wanted to die for the sake of Allah. He deemed it inappropriate and years and years later as he got older, he said after that I did so much deeds in repentance and I still do ask Allah to forgive me for that which I said.

Your tongue may be the determining factor in your ultimate destiny. May Allah protect you from Jahannam. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said whoever can guarantee to me what is between his lips and what is between his legs, I can guarantee to him Jannah. If you look at marital problems, problems between blood brothers, problems between brothers in the community, killing and many other problems – the tongue has a major role to play. If you are wondering why your Imaan is weak, one of the first things you have to start with is checking your tongue out. The biggest source of strengthening your Imaan is your tongue.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam taught us to say good or remain silent. That is not a Haraam or Halaal standard, but that is a standard above that. If it is good then I am going to say it, and if it is neutral I am going to keep it to myself. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam referred to some of the tongue ailments as Moobiqaat (موبقات). Do you know what Moobiqaat means? Doomers and destroyers. He put some tongue ailments in the same category as Moobiqaat like usury, black magic and killing, and one of them is accusing women in their honour.

In Shu'bal-Imaan (شعب الإيمان) by al-Bayhaqi:

مَرْحَبًا بِكَ مِنْ بَيْتٍ ، مَا أَعْظَمَكَ وَأَعْظَمُ حُرْمَتَكَ ، وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِ أَعْظَمُ
حُرْمَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْكَ

When the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam saw the Ka'bah after not seeing it for a long time, he looked at it and he talked to the Ka'bah. He said how honourable are you, but the honour and sanctity of a believer is more

honourable than you. Then he said Allah has prohibited the blood and the honour and wealth of the believers.

Let me tell those people who have loose slanderous tongues what this Hadith means, in a basic way in which they have probably never heard it before. Would anyone curse the Ka'bah? Everyone holds it sacred and it is beyond the imagination of a Muslim to curse the Ka'bah. Would anyone take a sledgehammer, go to the Ka'bah and try to take it down? Or take a hammer and chisel, go to the Ka'bah and try to take it down and demolish it? That is stuff most of the major sinners of this Ummah do not even imagine. What would you do if someone cursed or tried to demolish the Ka'bah? Speaking about the honour of a believer is a bigger sin than speaking about the Ka'bah or cursing the Ka'bah. Taking down the Ka'bah stone by stone is a smaller sin than killing a believer. The honour and sanctity of a Muslim is big in the eyes of Allah and the righteous believers.

When you stand before Allah on The Judgment Day and He asks you why you said that about your brother, you have an opportunity to defend yourself. Why did you say this about your sister? Why did you say this about those righteous people? That brother that was in prison and those people who are defending the Ummah – why did you say that about them? You get the opportunity to answer. O Allah, I found it on Google? I ask you by Allah, is that going to stand before Allah? That does not even stand in the most oppressive of manmade courts today, to stand before the court of 'Allaamul-Ghuyooob, Al-Hakam and Al-'Adl. I found it on a forum or on a Twitter, so I went passing it along? Is that a defence you can put before Allah?

Al-Fudhayl Ibn 'Iyaadh said I know some of my friends who would remain silent from a Friday to a Friday – meaning from one Friday to another Friday, they would not say anything but some Qur'an, Dhikr and Ibaadah. They protected their tongues. Abu Na'eem and Ibn Abi Dunya narrated that Ibn Abbaas spoke to his tongue and he told his tongue – speak good and you will succeed, otherwise you will regret it. He was warning his tongue and reminding himself that it is a dangerous muscle. Ibn Abbaas said it reached me that there is no bigger enemy to one than his own tongue on The Judgment Day.

Let your example be the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Anas Ibn Maalik said he served him for ten years and he never said Uff to him. That is how you really know someone – when you live with them and you interact with them. Anas even said that sometimes he did not do stuff the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told him to do. He never said Uff to him, yelled or screamed at him or cursed him.

Get in the habit of contemplating what you say before you utter it. Al-Hasan al-Basri said one who does not restrain his tongue does not know his Deen. Whatever words you have, they are your prisoner. You have got them as a prisoner and you have control over them. Feel good that they are your prisoner. Once you let them out, you are their prisoner. You have become a prisoner to them and you have to handle their consequences in this Dunya and before Allah.

You find many who are willing to leave drinking, adultery and fornication, usury and other sins, but they cannot restrain the tongue. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

إِذَا أَصْبَحَ ابْنُ آدَمَ فَإِنَّ الْأَعْضَاءَ كُلَّهَا تُكْفِّرُ اللِّسَانَ ، فَتَقُولُ : اتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِينَا ، فَإِنَّمَا نَحْنُ بِكَ ، فَإِنِ اسْتَقَمَّتْ اسْتَقَمْنَا ، وَإِنِ اعْوَجَجَتْ اعْوَجَجْنَا

When you wake up, the limbs tell the tongue – fear Allah in us. If you do good, we will be in good status. If you do bad, we are going to be bad.

They are going to fry because of the tongue. It is amazing to see how many would never go near major sins, yet they unleash their tongues on the believers day and night. People who you look at and say Allahumma Baarik – the Miswaak in the mouth, the long beard, the beautiful Hijaab, in and out of the Masjid, 'Umrah and Hajj every other day. All that hard work and they are trying to donate it to people by what they do on their tongues.

In Al-Awsat (الأوسط), at-Tabaraani narrated a Hadith from Baraa' Ibn 'Aazib radhiallahu anhu:

الرِّبَا ثَلَاثَةٌ وَسَبْعُونَ بَابًا أَيْسَرُهَا مِثْلُ أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الرَّجُلُ أُمَّهُ ، وَإِنَّ أَرْبَى الرِّبَا عَرَضُ الرَّجُلِ الْمُسْلِمِ

In Mustadarak al-Haakim, he said this is in accordance with Bukhari and Muslim. I know some scholars said it is weak, but I believe it is authentic. Ribaa is seventy three sections or in another narration seventy two – the least of it in sins is similar to one having sexual relationship with his mother. Please listen to this. Ribaa is seventy two or seventy three levels or categories, and the least of it is equivalent in sins to one having sexual relationship with his mother, and the worst form of Ribaa is one dishonouring a Muslim. What do you mean O Prophet of Allah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam? Meaning that one having sex with his mother is less of a sin than dishonouring a Muslim. Usury is less of a sin than dishonouring a Muslim. A lesson for those who call themselves refuters, the modernists who have the whispers of the devils, and the masses of the Ummah who are ignorant in this matter.

Be careful with your tongue because most of the punishment in Jahannam is from it. Be careful of the tongue because most of the punishment in your grave is from it. Wallahi, you do not want that punishment in the grave. Sometimes you tell someone to stop talking about that sister or that brother and they say but

brother, it is true. It is on the internet, go ask her ex-fiancée, go ask the local Imaam or go ask the community. Let us assume for our purpose that what you are saying is true. We are not arguing that – that is exactly what we are talking about! That is Gheebah (غيبه) and you have no business talking about it. It is a major sin when it is true! Now if it is not true, that is called Buhtaan (بهتان) and that is another tongue ailment. Like I said, each one of these are ailments you can talk about for Halaqaat.

Some sit and speak about their brothers, and fill their stomachs with the flesh of their brothers.

...أَيُّجِبُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ... ﴿الحجرات﴾:

١٢ ﴿

Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). (Surat al-Hujuraat: 12)

After a hefty feast on the flesh of Muslims, one goes to the Masjid and makes Salah or does 'Umrah, and then after that he or she thinks they are going to sleep in their grave like a bride or bridegroom.

After the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam passed by a grave, he said a man in that grave is being punished and he is being punished because of something that his tongue said. Some justify it and say but I will go say it to his face. If you go say it to his face, then you went from one sin to another. You moved from backbiting to harming your brother! If you want to go to his face, tell him in wisdom and kindness and advise him (being a mirror to your brother), then go do that. That is enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, and we want you to do that. Go tell him that is wrong brother, you cannot do that. Try to guide him and help him, or tell those he will listen to.

Let us assume a brother did fornication or adultery – who are you to talk about it or repeat it? Who are you to confront him, unless it is to make Naseehah and advice? Are you the Khaleefah? If you have a Khaleefah, you can go to the Khaleefah so he can lash him. Otherwise, that is it – you do not mention it. If you are raising the matter to the Khaleefah then go ahead, and if you are giving him advice then go ahead. One needs to either advise him in a kind and sincere way, or put a lid on it. Once we get the Khaleefah, then you can tell the Khaleefah and he will do what he has to do.

Among the reasons harming a Muslim with the tongue is a big deal is because it is one of the most hurtful things to Muslim brothers and sisters. It gets many depressed and agonised for days and weeks, and sometimes for a lifetime. Today not only do I want to talk about those who do that gossiping, backbiting, lying and slandering, but I want you to be happy if you are on the receiving end. Giggle

when you hear someone talk about you. Smile and be happy. Can you imagine all the freebie reward you get out of the person who slandered you, and all the sins you are going to put on him? Deeds you never worked for and never expected. That is why the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam called them bankrupt – because they have a lot of deeds but they are going to give them to you. Not only are they going to give them to you, but your sins are going to pile on them.

Remember in the Tawheed class we spoke on Qantarah (قنطرة). After all the obstacles and after the Siraat, right when your foot is going to be on the front steps of Jannah, those who have disputes amongst each other have to go to a detour. They have to go al-Qantarah and settle the disputes before they enter Jannah. Some get their deeds lowered and some get their deeds raised.

When someone complained to al-Fudhayl Ibn 'Iyyaadh and said someone is talking bad about me, he said he is pouring good on you – he is pouring deeds on you. How many times have we spoken on this subject in Khutub and Duroos, and someone comes and says Wallah Shaykh I needed to hear that. It agonises the believers and that is why it is so big of a sin. From now on if you are on the receiving end, be happy. If you are spoken about, do not be depressed and sad. You know that Laylat al-Qadar that person stayed up all night in – you get that Laylat al-Qadar out of him. Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdi said such stunning words. He said if I did not hate that Allah be disobeyed on this earth, I would love for people to talk about me, gossip about me and slander me. What is better than getting deeds you never expected when you are standing before Allah? Your own mum would not give you those deeds. I still remember the setting in 1994 when I read it for the first time in the third volume of Faydh Al-Qadeer (فيض القدير) by Mannaawi. I still remember the year and the setting and I will never forget it, because it brings happiness to your heart.

Al-Hasan al-Basri heard someone talking about him, so he went to the market and bought some dates. Why Hasan al-Basri? Someone is talking about you – he is slandering and backbiting you so why do you go take him dates? The man asked him that question. He said you gave me your deeds so I am going to give you something in return. I am going to add to that and say al-Hasan al-Basri should have told him what I gave you is nothing compared to what you gave me. Some people like to give their Ramadhaans, their night of Laylat al-Qadar or their Hajj away.

Listen to this story. A blood brother and a sister went to Hajj, and the brother left his wife behind. She wanted to stay behind because she has a lot of kids, so she stayed behind at home. During the Hajj, the brother and sister were walking in some place and the brother said let me just quickly buy this gift for my wife. The sister was in a rush and she said one simple word about his wife. They were not even on bad terms, they were on good terms but it was just some words she let out. In her country, the wife saw a dream – the one that did not go to Hajj. She saw a dream that her sister in law gave her Hajj to her as a present. She called the Shaykh up – Shaykh I had this very weird dream that my sister in law gave me her Hajj. He said she must have said something, backbit or gossiped about

you, and her Hajj is a reward for you – that is what you are going to end up getting. When her sister in law returned, she told her the dream. They were on very good terms and the sister in law admitted it, apologised and asked her for forgiveness. They were on good terms, but one word and she was going to give the entire Hajj to her for that! Imagine sentences, articles, constant harassment and years of feuding. Imagine how much reward they are going to lose.

Wallahi, speaking about Muslims in a bad way is not an easy game. I am going to tell you it may be decade's worth of deeds to compensate for a few words you said about a Muslim. A few verbal words, but it may take a lifetime's worth of deeds to compensate for them. Someone might say come on now, you are exaggerating and you are basing on this on dreams. I say I do not base it on dreams, but take it from the perspective of the harm you inflict on Muslims and take it more so from this Hadith. When the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was about to marry Safiyyah radhiyallahu 'anha, Aishah radhiyallahu 'anha said she is short. In another narration, she did not say she is short but she just gestured that she is short. A simple hand movement and one word to say she is short – that is all it was. What did the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam tell her? The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told her if you were to put that in an ocean, it would change the ocean. Do you ever reflect on these Ahaadith when you read them? In Sunan Abi Dawood:

لَقَدْ قُلْتُ كَلِمَةً لَوْ مُزِجَتْ بِمَاءِ الْبَحْرِ لَمَزَجَتْهُ

Aishah radhiyallahu 'anha, put that gesture or that word in the Pacific Ocean and it will change the colour of the Pacific Ocean. What it means is that it may cost you the Pacific Ocean's worth of deeds to compensate for that one word.

After hearing this, will you not reconsider everything you say, contemplate it and think about it before you say it? And you my brother and my sister on the receiving end, rejoice to the mountains and oceans of deeds that you are going to get, which your mum, your dad and your child would not even give you. You get it from the person who gossiped about you and backbit you.

You see those who get together after Taraweeh and they bring one Muslim after another – slandering and backbiting them. They start with the Imaam and the guy to their right and the guy to their left. They sit and laugh and then they get into politics and they slander men whose souls are possibly now in green birds, or on their way to being in green birds. What happens to all their deeds? That Taraweeh and that Qiyaam – they gave it as a gift to people. Not that one night only, but possibly for years – they are going to give it as a gift to someone.

When they told Aishah there are people who speak ill about Abu Bakr and Umar after their death, she said Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala cut their deeds – their deeds stopped when they died and this is one of the means by which Allah wanted to extend more deeds to them. Abdullah Ibn al-Mubaarak said if I were to slander or backbite someone, it would be no other than my mother and my

father, because I do not know anyone more worthy of reward than my mother and father.

In slander, Gheebah and those matters, you are either spoken about, you are the speaker or you are listening. If you are spoken about, we said enjoy the reward and do not be sad anymore. From today when someone speaks about you, do not feel sad. Remember the free Hajj you are getting, remember the free Ramadhaan you are getting, and remember the oceans and mountains of deeds that are going to come at you. Remember those deeds that are going to swipe you off your feet to Firdaws and you did not even have to work for them. As for those who speak, we already mentioned the Ahaadith warning about that. Now there is one who is listening and that is what I want to get to. Those who are listening – you have to withdraw as soon as possible or advise that person to be quiet. If they be quiet, you can continue sitting with them. If he does not stop, then you leave. You the listener are part of it and you will be a partner to him because Allah said in similar matters:

وَقَدْ نَزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مَثَلْتُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا

النساء: ١٤٠ ﴿﴾

And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'an) that when you hear the Verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. Surely, Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell. (Surat an-Nisaa': 140)

إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مَثَلْتُمْ

(But if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them.

If you listen to them, you are a partner to them. Be above and beyond all that and defend the honour of your brother or your sister. Guard the honour of a Muslim and Allah will guard your face on The Judgment Day.

مَنْ رَدَّ عَنْ عَرَضِ أَخِيهِ رَدَّ اللَّهُ عَنْ وَجْهِهِ النَّارَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

In Sunan at-Tirmidhi. If you are sitting in a setting and they begin to gossip and backbite, if you defend the honour of your brother then Allah will defend your face from Jahannam.

Be like Abu Ayyub the killer of rumours. Allah revealed Qur'an about him and his wife, for the stance they took to kill a rumour that inflicted the Ummah. Aishah radhiallahu 'anha – our mother and the definition of honour gets accused in her honour. Muhammad Ibn Ishaq said that when people began to speak on the honour of Aishah, word got to Abu Ayyub (his name is Khaalid Ibn Zayd al-Ansaari radhiallahu 'anhu). Look at the discussion they had. He told his wife Umm Ayyub, if you were alone with that man in the desert like Aishah was, would you do anything? She said no way. He said Aishah is better than you, she would not have done anything. End of discussion and they killed the rumour. She did not say but Aishah is younger and Aishah is better looking, or I do not believe it but it is a possibility. No, it is done – Aishah would have never done it. Allah revealed Qur'an in the honour of Abu Ayyub and his wife.

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا
إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿النور: ١٢﴾

Why then, did not the believers, men and women, when you heard it (the slander) think good of their own people and say: "This (charge) is an obvious lie?" (Surat an-Noor: 12)

Whenever you hear rumours or slander about your Muslim brother or sister with nothing to back them up, tell them you are a liar. This is an obvious lie so be quiet. You can do it in a good way and stop the rumour. Kill it and do not pass it on. This verse says two things – number one is think good internally, and number two is take it a step further and say this is a sheer lie. Just because something was said, it does not give you the right to pass it on. Be the one who kills the rumour. If you are a listener, stop those who backbite, slander and harm Muslims. Do you ever see anyone gossip and slander to himself? If me, you and all the other brothers and sisters do not listen, he is not going to sit in his room and gossip and backbite.

The one who brings you the news of what was said about others, what is going on with others and Nameemah (نَمِيمَة) – he is a Nammaam (نَمَام) and a Qattaat

(قَتَات). Do not think those who do that Nameemah confide in you. You might enjoy it when he is talking about others, but it is only a matter of time before he turns and starts talking about you to others. The one who spoke about you originally was shooting blanks and he missed you, since you did not hear about it and it did not hit your heart. You will get the reward, but it did not hurt you in this life because you did not know about it. The one who brought you what was said about you is like someone taking the gun of that person and helping him aim

so it will pierce your heart. Both are worse than each other. Yahya Ibn Katheer said those who spread rumours and the words of others, and gossip and slander – what they do in moments is more evil than what black magicians do in years.

Imaam Ahmad went to visit a man who was sick. He asked the man who was sick – did the doctor come check up on you? The man said yes. He has been sick for a while, so Imaam Ahmad said well who checked up on you? The ill person named the doctor and Imaam Ahmad said try this other doctor. On the spot, Imaam Ahmad said Astaghfirullah Al-'Adheem, I just did Gheebah. Just because he preferred one doctor over another, because of the high standards he holds his tongue accountable to, he deemed it that he was talking about the other doctor.

Whenever you want to speak ill of a Muslim, remember your own mistakes. People are flooded up to their heads in mistakes, but they want to talk about others. Put yourself in the shoes of that other person and think about how he is going to feel when you talk ill about him or her.

Finally, some say I want to repent and I do not want that person to take my deeds. Number one – you apologise to them. If you know they are open hearted, they will accept it and it will not cause more harm, go to them and apologise to them. If you think it will make matters worse, do not do it because the whole purpose of this whole matter is to eliminate hardships and problems among Muslims. If you know it is going to create more hardship, make Du'aa for him, speak good of him in some settings and give charity in his name. That is the best thing to do. If you were in a setting where you mentioned him in bad, go in a similar setting and try to mention him in good or make Du'aa for him. That is number one and that way you have given him his right back. Now you deal with the right to Allah, which is three prongs. You say Astaghfirullah, you plan on never doing that again, and then you regret your past. Inshaa Allah, Allah will forgive you, and you train yourself so that you will not do it again.

Saying Goodbye to Ramadhaan: Pardon and Forgive

The days passed by and they passed by faster than anyone expected. It is as if we just gathered here yesterday talking about how one shackles his inclinations the day the Shaytaan gets shackled, and today this is our farewell Khaatirah. That is Ramadhaan and that is the days of one's life – they pass by and what you get out of them is your deeds for you or your sins against you. Glory and congratulations to those who Ramadhaan leaves with a white clean register – one that will make one proud when he stands before Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. Congratulations to those whose tears generously flowed over their cheeks in humility and reverence, enjoying the special bond between them and Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. Blessed be those who purified themselves with deeds – those who honoured and elevated their souls with nearness to Allah. That is the way to honour and cure your soul.

How privileged is he who leaves Ramadhaan with a new relationship with Allah – renewed vows, firm promises, a clean slate and fresh resolutions. They (the others) have worthless New Year's resolutions that they never keep, and we have honourable Ramadhaan resolutions to Allah. Our resolution is to remain good and distance ourselves from sins, and if we stumble – we jump back up with repentance. As the clock is ticking, Ramadhaan is almost slipping away, but our vow is not to let Qiyaam and Siyaam slip away. Our resolution is that what Ramadhaan instilled in us – it shall become part of us for the rest of the year until next Ramadhaan, and then for the rest of our lives.

We got Taqwa (god consciousness) out of Ramadhaan – awareness that Allah is watchful over us, and that shall remain throughout the year. Ramadhaan has gone, but humility to Allah, recitation of the Qur'an, Du'aa to Allah and pleading with Allah shall remain. You changed your ways, you left so many sins and you repented from many more. Allah rescued you from the deep darkness of the sins and now you are walking out a clean and pure man – as clean and pure as the day your mother gave birth to you Inshaa Allah. Do not drown yourself in the sewage of sins again.

In the last few hours of Ramadhaan, give it all you got. There is no time to rest. As believers, our rest only comes when both of our feet enter Jannah and that is when we rest. You may have had a slow beginning or shortcomings in the early part of Ramadhaan, but matters are based on how they end so let Ramadhaan end with the best that you got. While you do that, you have to start preparing for what is after Ramadhaan. Do not let it take you by surprise. Just like we prepared for Ramadhaan before Ramadhaan, in the final of moments of Ramadhaan we

give it all we got and at the same time, we prepare ourselves for what is after Ramadhaan.

What is after Ramadhaan? The Shaytaan has been resting and watching in agony. He sees your Salah and your Ibaadah, he sees that clean cloak of Imaan you are wearing and he wants to drag you into the gutter again. He has been restrained in bitterness and agony. He is watching all the deeds and all the repentance, but he cannot do anything about it. Do not let him get you to breach that covenant with Allah. Do not break your oath and vow with Allah. Your deeds in Ramadhaan are like the most beautiful mansion anyone could build. You built it brick by brick and layer by layer, every second of Ramadhaan. You suffered to build it – the hunger, the thirst, the sleep, overcoming desires and struggling with your Nafs (your inclination). Your deeds accumulated in Ramadhaan are like the billions a man accumulates in hard work throughout his life.

What would you say if any one of you worked so hard on a special project and it took weeks or maybe months, you saved it as a PowerPoint file and then just out of the blue for no reason, right before you were going to hand it to your professor, you went and formatted your hard drive? Everyone is going to say he is a crazy man, just like someone who burned the millions he accumulated throughout his lifetime in hard labour. That is the example of one who goes back to his old ways after Ramadhaan.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّتِي نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَاثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ... ﴿النحل: ٩٢﴾

And be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun after it has become strong, by taking your oaths a means of deception among yourselves. (Surat an-Nahl: 92)

Jurayj, as-Suddi and Ibn Katheer said this was that crazy woman in Makkah, as we mention every year. Some even mentioned her name (Raytah Bint 'Amr Ibn Ka'b) and others mentioned that it is just a breach of covenant or promise. That crazy woman of Makkah would knit that beautiful blanket, cloak, hat or whatever it may be, and when she was done knitting she would pull the two strands, rendering that beautiful item that she made into just a pile of strings. What are you doing crazy woman? Tie those threads, move on and make another one. She does it over and over and over again. Everyone looks at her and says she is crazy, just like the one who had that PowerPoint project and his career was dependant on it, but right before he was going to submit it he formatted his hard drive. The one who destroys his deeds after Ramadhaan is even crazier than that.

Do not be like that crazy woman who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it becomes good and strong. She finishes it, and then she takes the strings apart. Do not be like the man who built that high-rise after years and years, and as soon as it was done and he was about to move in, he puts dynamite in it and

blows it down. Do not be a Ramadhaani, be an Imaani, Ihsaani, Rabbaani – that is exactly what we are trying to get at. Ramadhaan dies and the days die, but the Lord of Ramadhaan and the days never dies!

Do you ever see or smell someone who smells very horrible – you look at him and he is unkempt, untidy, dishevelled and dirty. You see him and you cannot look at him or stand his smell. Suddenly, he takes a shower, combs his hair and puts on cologne, and then immediately after his makeover he heads to a sump of waste and takes a dive into it. That is the one who Allah cleaned from sins, and right after Ramadhaan he walks into the sump of sins. Did you ever see a weak man or woman who is yellow and pale, because they caught some kind of illness or disease. He was about to die and he went to the hospital for that illness. They do therapy on him, they give him medicine or whatever it may be, and he comes back to life a strong and healthy person, free of his illness. What if he walks out of that hospital and goes right back to that which the doctor told him caused the illness that he had? You are a healthy person with the Imaanic therapy of Ramadhaan, so do not let the disease of sins make you hazel and weak after Ramadhaan. Do not let the Shaytaan fulfil his vow and promise over mankind. He said:

...لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لِأَخْتِنِكَ ذُرِّيَّتُهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿الإِسْرَاءُ﴾

﴿٦٢﴾

“If You give me respite (keep me alive) to the Day of Resurrection, I will surely seize and mislead his offspring (by sending them astray) all but a few!” (Surat al-Israa’: 62)

I shall surely seize them and mislead them, just like one leads a dog – that is what Ahtanikan (أَخْتِنَكَ) means. He wants to lead us, just like someone puts a tether on a dog and leads him.

After that, Allah says:

وَلَقَدْ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿سَبَأٌ﴾

﴿٢٠﴾

And indeed Iblees (Shaytaan) did prove true his thought about them, and they followed him, all except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allah). (Surat Saba’: 20)

Shaytaan fulfilled his promise.

إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

All except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allah).

Be among those exceptions. From now on, you need to plan for what is after the 'Eed, otherwise the Shaytaan will get the better part of you. After Ramadhaan, have a certain portion of Qur'an to recite every day. From now you have to make the intention that no matter what happens, I am not going to miss it every single day. Have nightly private moments with Allah, no matter how small they are. Never miss them, no matter what. Have days of the month that you fast, no matter what. Two or three days a month, and then you are going to see that you need more. You are going to progress, but just start with a little bit that you will not leave no matter what kind of day you have.

In these days, do the honourable and noble deed of asking Allah to accept.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ

﴿المؤمنون: ٦٠﴾

And those who give that (their charity) which they give (and also do other good deeds) with their hearts full of fear (whether their alms and charities, etc have been accepted or not), because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning). (Surat al-Mu'minoon: 60)

Aishah asked the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam – those are the ones who drink alcohol and steal (the sinners)? Listen to the unexpected answer from the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He said those are not the sinners – those are the ones who pray, fast and give charity, and then fear it is not going to be accepted. Some of the Salaf remained asked Allah to accept their Ramadhaan for six months. Just because you did it, that does not mean you are guaranteed acceptance.

Ibraheem raised the pillars of the Ka'bah by an order from Allah. A super special Messenger, a very noble task, and a direct order from His Lord. A Messenger whose sincerity no one can doubt, yet he is saying:

... رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿البقرة: ١٢٧﴾

“Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All Hearer, the All Knower.” (Surat al-Baqarah: 127)

Do not feel arrogant that you did a worship to Allah. Imagine you were desperate and you borrowed a thousand dollars from someone, and then you went to pay it back. You were late and it was deficient, so do you give that thousand dollars back in arrogance? Do you say hey take your thousand dollars and get out of my face? Or do you give that thousand dollars back in humility, wanting him not to be mad at you because he did you a favour? The blessings of Allah over you are numerous and there is nothing you can do on this earth that can pay Him back for what He has given you, so do not get arrogant with your deeds. Ask Allah to accept your deeds from you and be humble. Allah gave you and gave you and no matter what you do, you can never repay it. No matter how good you perfected it and no matter how much of it you did, Allah gave you much more than you can imagine.

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا... ﴿النحل: ١٨﴾

And if you would count the graces of Allah, never could you be able to count them. (Surat an-Nahl: 18)

In a few hours, the big ceremony of one's life will be held and the certificates of Ramadhaan will be handed out. Keep working and asking Allah that your neck will be among those necks freed from Jahannam, and that you are liberated from Jahannam. A'aathanallahu Wa Iyyaakum Minhaa (أعاذنا الله وإياكم منها). While you prepare yourself for this transition, there is another matter to work on as Ramadhaan slips away. What we have talked about so far is first of all, you keep working to the last moment of Ramadhaan and of course like we said at the beginning, the last moment of Ramadhaan is Maghrib. Our days start and end at Maghrib, so if they say for example tomorrow is the last day of Ramadhaan, then it ends at Maghrib. You work to that last moment. Number two – you ask Allah to accept. Number three – you work on the transition. Number four and the final point that I want to talk about is keep in mind to rinse and clean your heart.

Part of the university of Ramadhaan is to leave with a pure heart, but why is that more important in Ramadhaan? We talked about this issue pertaining to Ibaadah, and now I am talking about it pertaining to other brothers and sisters of yours. You have to clean your heart towards Muslims. Why does that pertain more so to Ramadhaan? Listen to the Hadith. Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

تُعْرَضُ الْأَعْمَالُ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ خَمِيسٍ وَاثْنَيْنِ ، فَيَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا...

The deeds of people are presented to Allah every Monday and Thursday. Allah forgives everyone who does not associate a partner to Him (everyone who is a Muslim).

...إِلَّا أَمْرًا كَانَتْ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ أَخِيهِ شَحْنَاءٌ ، فَيُقَالُ : أَرْكُوا هَذَيْنِ حَتَّى
يَصْطَلِحَا ، أَرْكُوا هَذَيْنِ حَتَّى يَصْطَلِحَا

Except those two who were deserting each other. Allah says leave those until they reconcile. Put theirs aside until they reconcile.

Reconcile and re-establish your relationships that you severed with others. Why is it so important in these days? If you want that hard work you did in Ramadhaan to soar to the heavens, reconcile and re-establish relationships that you severed right now. Do it right now before Ramadhaan ends. Someone might say it was not my fault – it was his fault, he started it and he did it. That is not the issue here – we are not judging whose fault it is. We are saying reconcile with your brothers and sisters if you want your deeds to soar. He might say I do not get along with him, or a sister might say I do not get along with her. We are not talking about going overnight or bringing them over for a feast, and inviting them for coffee or dinner. If you can do that, then do it and that is good. The minimum amount so you will not be considered as the one whose deeds Allah says to put aside, is As-Salaamu 'Alaykum. That is the minimum amount. You have to have that with your brother and you have to have that with your sister, meaning brothers with brothers and sisters with sisters. You have to say As-Salaamu 'Alaykum to lift abandoning your brother. Do it before 'Eed in a phone call or in a text, or at the Masjid. Be the one who initiates it because that is the best of the two.

That is the first issue on abandoning your Muslim brother. Say As-Salaamu 'Alaykum and break it with As-Salaamu 'Alaykum. Another issue is that most mingle with other Muslims and relatives more so in this month than on regular days. Iftaar, Taraweeh and in the Masjid. They have Iftaar together with families and there is more contact, so there is more of a chance of problems occurring. That is why it is also essential to clean your heart at the end of Ramadhaan. Brothers from out of state came to visit me a few days ago. They said we want to stop by after Taraweeh, so after I returned I waited and waited and they came very late. I said where have you been? They said after 'Ishaa someone takes the microphone and begins to blast another group in the Masjid and then the feud goes on back and forth, and the Taraweeh gets delayed. Now the final moments approach, so establish hearts with no ill will and no evil – something that is lacking in this Ummah. Where are those who go to sleep like our Salaf, with no ill feelings in their hearts towards their brothers. He could be right or he could be wrong, but that is not the issue. The issue is cleaning the heart.

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿الحشر: ١٠﴾

And those who came after them say: "Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful." (Surat al-Hashr: 10)

Look how beautiful that is. Allah praised them because they make the Du'aa:

لَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

In the thirteenth volume of Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah (البداية والنهاية) by Ibn Katheer, Sufyaan Ibn Husayn said I mentioned something bad about a brother in front of Iyyaas Ibn Mu'aawiyah. Iyyaas was a knowledgeable scholar and a man who feared Allah. Sufyaan said Iyyaas looked me straight in the eyes and said did you fight the Romans? They were some of the enemies of Islam who were killing Muslims back then. Sufyaan said no. Iyyaas said did you fight the people of Sind, the people of Hind or the Turks? Sufyaan said no. He said the Romans, the people of Sind, the people of Hind and the Turks (the enemies of Islam) are at peace from you and the Muslims are not? Sufyaan said I never went back to talking about Muslims after that.

There is some whose brothers see their Botox smiles, their slander and their harm, while they reserve their wholehearted smiles for their counterpart friends (enemies of Tawheed) on the interfaith round tables. They are willing to overlook a man's Shirk and make it incumbent on one to have dialogue with him, but if you dare adopt the opinion that voting is Haraam, they will make you an outcast, spread lies and rumours about you, and try to get you behind the walls. Unity with the grave worshippers is okay to them. Dialogue with the people of the trinity is Fardh 'Ayn. Brothering the Shi'ah – that is on the top of the list and it is obligatory. But if you ever speak on the causes of the Ummah, speak to someone who speaks on the causes of the Ummah or learn from him, then woe to you. If you speak about the weak, those who are imprisoned, those who are killed and those who have no one to speak about them, then woe to you. Pulpy and mushy they are with the enemies of Allah, and tusks and growls to the believers of Laa Ilaaha Illallah. That is their characteristic – the opposite of:

...أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ... ﴿المائدة: ٥٤﴾

Humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers. (Surat al-Maa'idah: 54)

Sufyaan Ibn Husayn said I never went back to harming or harbouring ill feelings towards any Muslim after that. You have a lot of shortcomings – clean your heart. Learn how to treat your brothers from the man whose manners were purified by Allah, from on top of seven heavens. At-Tirmidhi narrated this Hadith and said it is Hasan, and al-Bayhaqi also narrated it in a different chain. They told the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam Thaqeef are throwing arrows at us – the arrows of Thaqeef are burning us! These are people who were not enemies, but were throwing arrows at the Sahaabah. Make Du'aa on them O Prophet of Allah!

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِ ثَقِيفًا وَأُتِ بِهِمْ

O Allah guide Thaqeef and bring them to me.

Another tribe that harboured animosity towards the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was Daws. At-Tufayl Ibn 'Amr ad-Dawsi embraces Islam and then he goes to convey the message back to Daws. They give him a hard time, but some of his relatives become Muslim and among those who became Muslim with him was Abu Hurayrah. He returned to visit the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and he is telling him how his tribe is. At-Tufayl said they are refusing to believe and they are giving me a hard time, make Du'aa on them O Prophet of Allah. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam raised his hands. Abu Hurayrah is sitting there and he said when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam raised his hands, I said that the days of Daws are done. It is over for Daws – Allah is going to doom and destroy them. But the mercy to mankind raised his hands and said:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِ دَوْسًا وَأُتِ بِهِمْ

O Allah guide Daws and bring them to me.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

And We have sent you (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) not but as a mercy for the 'Aalameen (mankind, Jinns and all that exists). (Surat al-Anbiyaa': 107)

I say this because I wish some Muslims could treat each other with the guidance, kindness and wisdom that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam treated some of his enemies with. They made him bleed, they pelted him with stones, and they were going to tell Quraysh that he is sneaking behind their backs to spread the

message to nearby towns of at-Taa'if. When he told Aishah about this day, he said this was the worst day of his Da'wah career. Later on before he died, she asked him what was the worst day? It was this one – the day of at-Taa'if. Out of the twenty three years, this was the worst day, and you know the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam had a lot of difficult days.

Within moments, now he has the upper hand. His sweat did not dry, the blood did not go away and now he has the upper hand. Not any type of upper hand, but the angel of Jibreel and the angel of the mountains. One word would have crumbled down the mountain of at-Taa'if in chunks big enough to roll down and destroy the disbelievers of Makkah, after it swallows the people of at-Taa'if and sets a lesson for the world – do not ever mess with Muhammad again (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)! But what were his words? No, maybe Allah will bring from their descendants those who will worship Allah.

لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُخْرِجُ مِنْ أَصْلَابِهِمْ مَنْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ

Deep foresight. Do you realise the foresight of those words? Listen to a snippet of that wisdom. From the most notorious enemies of Allah and those who caused the most harm to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, came their descendants who brought leadership to Islam and those who were the greatest heroes of Islam. When they were making love to their women, mocking the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and conspiring to do more, thinking they had the upper hand – they were in reality making babies that are one day going to bring victory to Islam.

The man who the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam called the Fir'awn of this Ummah – from his descendants came Ikrimah Ibn Abi Jahl. Ikrimah the son of Abu Jahl, who made history in his fights alongside Abu Bakr against the apostates and more so in The Battle of Yarmook after that. Al-Waleed Ibn al-Mugheerah – the man who Allah threatens in the Qur'an when He says:

ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ﴿١١﴾ وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْدُودًا ﴿١٢﴾
 وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَهَّدْتُ لَهُ تَمْهِيدًا ﴿١٤﴾ ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ
 ﴿١٥﴾ كَلَّا ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عَنِيدًا ﴿١٦﴾ سَأَرْهَقُهُ صُعُودًا
 ﴿١٧﴾ الْمَدْثَرُ

Leave Me Alone (to deal) with whom I created Alone (without any means, i.e. Al-Waleed Bin Al-Mugheerah Al-Makhzoomi)! And then granted him resources in abundance. And children to be by his side! And made life smooth and comfortable for him! After all that he desires that I should give more; Nay! Verily, he has been stubborn and opposing Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses,

lessons, signs, revelations, etc). I shall oblige him to (climb a slippery mountain in the Hellfire called As-Sa'ood, or to) face a severe torment! (Surat al-Muddathir: 11-17)

The man who gathered the Qurayshians to make one standard lie, when the lies were many against the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He fathered Sayfullah al-Maslul (سيف الله المسلول) – the drawn sword of Allah (Khaalid Ibn al-Waleed radhiallahu 'anhu). From Abu Lahab came 'Utbah and Mu'tib – the men who became believers in the conquest of Makkah and fought such a strong fight in The Battle of Hunayn.

Now is the time for those filthy hearted people to wash their hearts from any ill feelings against their brothers and sisters, before Ramadhaan is over. Evil and wicked hearts that sometimes harbor animosity for fifteen, twenty or twenty five years. Even if it was not that long and even if it just happened a few days ago in Ramadhaan at the Masjid, it does not matter – clean the heart out.

When a man kills another, in Islamic law he goes to the Khaleefah. The Khaleefah appoints it to a judge and he goes before the judge. Any immediate relative over the age of puberty can forgive the killer. He can be forgiven totally or they can make an agreement and forgive for a ransom. This is one of the few matters where even if it reaches the judge, the party can settle it, unlike other matters. Look at the wording when Allah talks about it in the Qur'an. When He is talking about it, He says:

...فَمَنْ عَفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبِعْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ
بِإِحْسَانٍ ... البقرة: ١٧٨

But whoever overlooks from his brother anything, then there should be a suitable follow-up and payment to him with good conduct. (Surat al-Baqarah: 178)

The guy just killed, but Allah refers to him not as a killer, but as a brother. He just killed, but he is still his brother. He is still Muslim and the bond of Laa Ilaaha Illallah is still there. Allah says Akheehi (أَخِيهِ) in a matter of murder! There are men who give their lives, wealth, honour and family for the sake of Allah, and there are those who give their lives for the sake of slander, envy and hatred, and harbor ill feelings. That contradicts Taqwa – that means you did not attain Taqwa in Ramadhaan.

Ibn 'Asaakir once said fear the flesh of the scholars, meaning do not backbite them, do not talk about them and do not slander them. Fear the flesh of the scholars because it is poisonous, and the destiny of one who degrades them is very short. I will revise it to say the flesh of every believer is poisonous and the

destiny of one who transgresses on it is very short. Wallahil-'Adheem I can give examples but we do not have time – examples of those with ill hearts towards Muslims, and within years they were apostates. Clear apostates, meaning they declared it – some declared they are Hindu. That filthy heart leads to bigger things. Clean that abscess and pus out of that heart.

They brought a man who was drinking to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. They bring him and whip him, they bring him and whip him, and he drinks again and again and again. A Sahaabi got sick and tired and he said:

أَخْزَاكَ اللَّهُ

May Allah embarrass you.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

لَا تَقُولُوا هَكَذَا ، لَا تُعِينُوا عَلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ

Do not say it like that. Do not aid the Shaytaan over your brother.

He is a believer and he is a Muslim. Yes, he committed the sin of drinking but that does not diminish that he is a believer in Laa Ilaaha Illallah, and I am not diminishing that sin. He committed a sin, but he may have a storage of deeds that generations like me and you could not have done. It may be Allah only exposed one of his sins, yet he has plenty of deeds me and you do not know about. It may be that the person harbouring ill feelings is hiding plenty of secrets, but Allah has not exposed them yet – that is why he is so bitter. Once you remove the arrogance and stop feeling that you are above everyone, that will make things easier for you to amend.

Bakr Ibn Abdillah said if you see a man occupied in the faults of others and forgetting his own, then know that Allah has plotted against him. That is a sign Allah plotted against him.

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾ الشعراء

The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except him who brings to Allah a clean heart [clean from Shirk (polytheism) and Nifaaq (hypocrisy)]. (Surat ash-Shu'araa': 88-89)

Someone is going to tell me okay, is this a continuation of the talk on fasting of the tongue? No, it is not – it is a totally different talk. Fasting of the tongue is watching what you say, but now we are talking about heart purification. Not

heart purification in Ibaadah because we already talked about that, but heart purification towards your brothers – to clean your heart towards your brothers. Everyone knows Ibn Taymiyyah. What kind of enemies did Ibn Taymiyyah have? His enemies were enemies in deep, major innovations. The scholars and rulers conspired against him because of principles he had in Islamic matters – in ‘Aqeedah and Tawheed. Everyone knows what Ibn Taymiyyah was about. He was never married, so he could not have had any disputes with any in laws. He had no money – all he had was the shirt on his back, so he could not have had any materialistic disputes with anyone. He slept most of his days in the Masjid, so he could not have had disputes with his landlord. He had no job, so he could not have had problems with a boss. His matters with others were matters of ‘Aqeedah.

You remember in The University of Yusuf talk, we mentioned that some scholars put Ibn Taymiyyah in prison and while he was in prison, the tables turned. The ruler they had was overthrown, and now the new leader who hated those scholars and the ex-leader took Ibn Taymiyyah out of prison and honoured him. He brought those scholars who put him in prison, to prison, and released Ibn Taymiyyah. He wanted one word from Ibn Taymiyyah. He already hated them, but he wanted one word to justify him killing them. One word and I will do it. He wanted to do it because he hated them and they supported the ex-leader. Ibn Taymiyyah said no, these are ‘Ulamaa and if they are gone there is going to be a lot of evil. In his book on Ibn Taymiyyah, Ahmad Fareed said when Ibn Makhloof was released (one of the biggest Maaliki Imaams of his time), he said I have never seen a man more magnanimous than Ibn Taymiyyah. We brought the rulers against Ibn Taymiyyah to imprison him, and when he had the upper hand to kill us and behead us with one word, he spared our lives, defended us and praised us.

For the fifth time in my life, I was reading a very important book which I suggest you all read. I do not know if it is translated or not. I did not even finish it for the fifth time before Ramadhaan, I stopped before Ramadhaan and I was in the middle of the second volume. It is a book called Madaarij As-Saalikeen (مدارج

السالكين), written by Ibn al-Qayyim (the student of Ibn Taymiyyah). He said I never saw a man like Ibn Taymiyyah – he never made Du’aa on his enemies. Ibn al-Qayyim said I went to give him good news one time. What is that good news Ibn al-Qayyim? He said I went to give him the good news that one of his biggest enemies died. Ibn al-Qayyim was so excited to go tell his Shaykh his enemy died, but when Ibn al-Qayyim walked in and told him so and so died, he said Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raaji’oon, there is no good news in a Muslim dying.

Ibn al-Qayyim said on the spot, he jumped up and went to the house of the family of that person who died to give them condolence. He went to the kids of that person and he told them I am like your father. You lost your father but I am now like your father. If you need anything, let me know. They got so happy, and they honoured and loved Ibn Taymiyyah so much. Ibn al-Qayyim said they honoured and loved him so much because of his pure heart. Look at his forgiveness, and

Ibn al-Qayyim called this person the biggest enemy of Ibn Taymiyyah. Ramadhan is slipping away. Let us forgive and forget. One of the students of Ibn Taymiyyah once said I wish I was to my friends, like Ibn Taymiyyah was to his enemies. I wish I could have the qualities he had with my friends, like he had with his enemies. We started a new page with Allah, now let us start a new page with Muslims.

Ali Ibn al-Husayn (the grandson of Ali Ibn Abi Taalib) had a servant, and one time she went to get him a vase of water to make Wudhu. She dropped the vase on his head while she was trying to help him and he was wounded. On the spot, she said:

...وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ... ﴿آل عمران: ١٣٤﴾

Those who repress their anger. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 134)

On the spot, he said I repress my anger. He is bleeding and this is a servant, but she knew who she was talking to.

Then she said:

...وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ... ﴿آل عمران: ١٣٤﴾

Those who pardon men. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 134)

He said I pardon you. I repressed my anger and I pardon you.

She finished the verse:

...وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿آل عمران: ١٣٤﴾

Verily, Allah loves Al-Muhsinoon (the good doers). (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 134)

He said you are free for the sake of Allah. Look at that manner and that pure white heart.

I will conclude with this Ayah that you all know – it was revealed about Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq. Imagine that the honour of your mother, your daughter or your sister is talked about and she is degraded. May Allah protect you and guard you and your relatives. Your blood boils, but imagine when it is someone you have been supporting for years and now he talks about an immediate relative. That was Mistah Ibn Uthaathah – a man who Abu Bakr used to give a monthly pay cheque to. He was very poor and among the people on the list of Abu Bakr. He used to give him charity every single month. His livelihood and his survival depended on Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq giving him charity, after Allah of course. When

people accused Aishah, he spoke ill about her so Abu Bakr cut him off and cut his pay cheque off. Days after, things got calm and Allah revealed verses declaring the innocence of Aishah.

Then the verse comes down specifically about Abu Bakr.

وَلَا يَأْتِلِ أُولُو الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ
وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا ۚ أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿النور: ٢٢﴾

And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, Al-Masaakeen (the poor), and those who left their homes for Allah's Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat an-Noor: 22)

This is what I conclude with. If you want Allah to forgive you, pardon and forgive. Conclude like that with Ramadhaan – that is how you want your Ramadhaan to end.

Abu Bakr said:

وَاللَّهِ إِنَّا نُحِبُّ – يَا رَبَّنَا

Wallahi, we love that You forgive us.

Then he went to the man and began to pay him again – a man who talked about his honour.

May Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala accept your fasting and your worship, and may you Inshaa Allah see many more Ramadhaans to come. In the same way we united here for His Sake in these Khawaatir, may we unite Inshaa Allah in the Firdaws al-A'la.